

The Rumbula Massacre – A Critical Examination of the Facts, Part 1

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1. The Rumbula Massacre in Mainstream Historiography

Of the individual mass shootings of Jews perpetrated by German special units together with local auxiliary forces in the occupied parts of the Soviet Union and the Baltic countries in 1941–1944, the one at Babi Yar near Kiev on 29–30 September 1941 is undoubtedly the best known. This massacre reportedly claimed the lives of 33,771 Jews, although the evidentiary basis for this figure has been disputed.^[1] In the shadow of Babi Yar, Holocaust historians list a number of five-figure mass shootings or repeated shootings at special “extermination sites”, such as Paneriai (Ponary) near Vilnius, Fort IX in Kaunas, Maly Trostenets near Minsk (sometimes referred to as an “extermination camp”),^[2] the Drobitski Yar ravine near Kharkov, Bronnaya Gora near Baranovichi, and the Rumbula site on the outskirts of Riga, where during two mass shootings, one on 30 November 1941 and another on 8 December 1941, the vast majority of the Jews in the Riga ghetto, a total of some 25,000 people, were reportedly massacred by police units under the command of the Higher Leader of the SS and Police (*HSSPF*) in *Reichskommissariat Ostland*, Friedrich Jeckeln. Jeckeln is accused of having previously carried out the mass shooting at Babi Yar, and on 27–28 August 1941 before that the Kamenets-Podolsky massacre which, with 23,600 reported victims, is claimed to be the first of the several purported five-figure massacres of Jews during the German occupation of Soviet territory.

In this study, I will focus on the Rumbula incidents, which have hitherto received no attention from revisionist historians. I will examine the reported events at Rumbula in light of the available documentary sources, the demographic evidence, and, most important, the material evidence. In connection with the demographic-statistical aspect as well as the discussion of certain German documents I have also found it necessary to include longer forays into the fates of the Jews in the rest of Latvia.

What then have the Holocaust historians to say about the events at Rumbula? The entry on the Riga ghetto in a voluminous encyclopedia of ghettos and camps which appeared in the United States in 2012 sums up the events as follows:

“On the order of the Higher SS and Police Leader Ostland, Friedrich Jeckeln, almost half of the ghetto inhabitants, more than 11,000 people, were murdered on November 30, 1941, by units of the German Order Police in Rumbula in a wooded area about 10 kilometers (6 miles) from the ghetto. Jeckeln and his staff planned this mass killing. The Jews residing at those addresses selected for the Aktion received instructions to gather at the ghetto's central square early in the morning; from there they were escorted to the killing site.

During this Aktion a rather unexpected incident happened. By this time the deportations of Jews from Germany to the Riga ghetto had already commenced. The first transport of 1,000 Berlin Jews arrived in Riga on the morning of November 30, 1941. Jeckeln decided to kill these individuals together with the Latvian Jews on his authority, without orders from Berlin. Dr. Rudolf Lange, the head of the Security Police in Latvia, refused to participate in the killing of German Jews without a specific order from the

Reich Security Main Office (RSHA), and he withdrew his men from the Aktion. The first part of the extermination of the inmates of the Riga ghetto therefore took place solely under Jeckeln's direction. The Order Police carried out the shooting without the support of the Security Police.

The second Aktion, aimed at killing most of the remainder of the Riga ghetto Jews, followed on December 8, 1941, again at the Rumbula Forest site. This time no German Jews were among the victims, and the Security Police actively participated in the massacre. The victims of this shooting numbered more than 14,000 people, and the total number of Latvian Jews killed in these two Aktions was at least 25,500. Those spared were mostly men and some younger women who were healthy enough to work and had been moved to a separate part of the ghetto on the evening of December 7, just before the second Aktion.”^[3]

Bernhard Press briefly describes the events of 30 November 1941 as follows:

“The people were driven down Sadovnikova Street and Ludzas Street and then out of the ghetto along Maskavas Street, kilometer after kilometer upstream [the Daugava River], until they finally reached their destination, which was named Rumbula [...]. Rumbula, which until that day had been only a tiny railroad station, a point on the map, became during those days a meaningful name in the history of the extermination of the Jews, just as the forest of Bikernieki had been previously and the Kaiserwald concentration camp was to be subsequently. Here mass graves had been dug in the forest, which was surrounded by soldiers. Anyone who had reached this place alive suddenly realized in a flash what awaited him or her. In the bitter frost, everyone had to undress, lay their clothes in separate piles, and wait for the bullet that was destined for them, while in the meantime new columns were arriving constantly and the buses driving back and forth brought in new victims. According to the eyewitness A. Baranovskis, the Rumbula station chief, the action began at 8:15 A.M. on November 30 and ended at 7:45 P.M. the same day. On that day more than 15,000 people were slaughtered by the Gestapo and the Latvian police. [...]

The arrival of the transports [of Reich Jews] was not at all convenient for the Gestapo, because the reception camps at Salaspils (Kurtenhof) and Jumpravmuiza (Jungfernhof) were still not finished and there were still Latvian Jews in the Riga ghetto. The first of these transports arrived in Riga on November 29, 1941, and the Gestapo decided to liquidate it immediately in view of the aforementioned difficulties it would have had lodging it. The same night the German Jews, about 1,000 people, were brought to Rumbula, where preparations for exterminating the Jews of Riga had already begun, and shot on November 30 before the execution of the Riga Jews had started. This unforeseen operation led to a delay in the execution of the first Jews who arrived [...].”^[4]

Latvian-American historian Andrew Ezergailis stresses the particular “Jeckeln method” allegedly used to implement the mass killing:

“In planning the massacre, Jeckeln adapted the system he had devised in Ukraine for the specific conditions in Riga. The system involved detailed planning, subdividing the assignment into manageable parts, and then selecting a specialist in each area. As Jeckeln's aide Paul Degenhart testified, there were nine aspects to the system: 1) SD men inside the ghetto drove the people out of the houses; 2) the Jews were organized in 500-person columns and brought by train to the killing grounds (actually they were driven on foot in 1,000-person columns); 3) the Order Police led the column to Rumbula; 4) the killing was done simultaneously in three pits; 5) the victims were undressed and their the valuables collected on

the way to the pits; 6) an inner and an outer gauntlet were formed to drive the people to the pits; 7) the victims were be driven [sic] directly into the pits, saving the labor of moving the bodies; 8) Russian submachine guns were used, because the clip had fifty bullets and could be set on single shots; 9) the victims lay face down in layers, after which the marksman would kill them with a bullet in the back of the head. This method has been referred to as *Sardinenpackung* ('sardine packing'), and even some of the EG operatives were horrified by its cruelty." [5]

We will return later to the issue of Jeckeln's "sardine packing" method. The "Jeckeln method" presumably ensured a killing rate that was nothing less than astonishing, as described by Ezergailis in another study:

"The killing was done by a twelve-man team that Jeckeln personally selected from his retinue, drivers, and bodyguards. While six men rested, the other six worked both sides of the pits. The killing was done with Russian (according to some witnesses Finnish) submachine guns set to fire single shots. [...]"

The killing started at 8:00 in the morning and lasted until 7:00 at night, three hours after nightfall. Remarkably, the twelve-man killing unit managed to murder 12,000 people per day. The Jeckeln method of killing even surpassed the killing rates in the death-camp factories. To kill 25,000 people in two 10-hour days, it meant that 1,250 were killed per hour; or 21 per minute, or one person every three seconds. Each marksman killed more than 2,000 people during the two days. In comparison, using the Stahlecker method [of Einsatzgruppe A] in Liepāja, it took three days, from 13–17 December, to kill 2,749 people. At Rumbula more people were killed every three hours." [6]

Most remarkable indeed. Not only must each of the twelve marksmen have been a virtual killer robot, able to murder men, women and children for hours on end, at least 200 victims per hour or 3.3 victims per minute or 1 victim every 18 seconds (assuming that each marksman rested for half of the "working day"), reloading his gun after every fifty shots, rarely or never missing a shot, and apparently remaining unaffected by the noise from the weapons and screams of the victims as well as the recoils from his weapon, but the victims must have acted like a uniform mass of drugged sheep, not putting up any resistance in the face of death, or even behaving in a panicky manner. Can the scenario painted by Ezergailis really be believed?

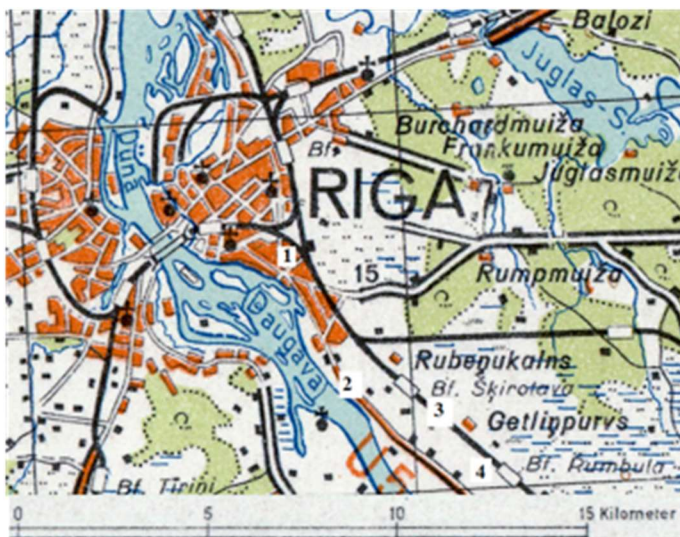


Figure 1. Riga during World War II. Detail from Deutsche Heereskarte, Osteuropa 1:300 000, 2nd ed. (1944), Blatt-Nr. S 57, Riga, with numbers added by the author. Legend: 1) Location of the Riga ghetto; 2) Maskavas iela (Moscow Street); 3) Railway line to Daugavpils (and further to Polotsk, Vitebsk and Smolensk); 4) Mass shooting site (Bf. = Bahnhof = railway station)

2. Early Reports on the Massacre

Before we begin our analysis of the demographic and statistical aspects of the Rumbula massacre we will take a brief look at what was reported of it during the war years. It is indeed quite remarkable how little, if anything, was reported. Take for example the *Contemporary Jewish Record*, an ambitious American-Jewish journal issued six times a year which in each issue presented a lengthy chronicle of news concerning Jewry worldwide during the preceding two months, drawing its sources from press and news bureaus the world over as well as reports from various Jewish organizations. In its issue of February 1942, chronicling the period November–December 1941, the journal merely noted that in early November the Germans had canceled all labor permits held by Jews, that Jews attempting to leave the Riga ghetto would be executed and that the Riga Jews were allowed only half the quantity of food allotted to the rest of the city's inhabitants.^[7] In the issue of April 1942 it was reported that the Germans had placed a number of ghettos in the occupied eastern territories under quarantine because of failure to check the spread of epidemics, and that they “had ceased taking Jews from Kaunas, Wilno, Riga, Tallin and Dwinsk to forced labor”. It was also noted that “over 30,000 Jews” had disappeared from the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius (Wilno/Vilna) “since German occupation last summer” and that it was “believed that half [of the disappeared Jews] are now in labor camps on the Soviet front, and the remainder have either been interned or executed” – a picture greatly at odds with the original version of events – but nothing was mentioned of the similar “disappearance” of most of the Riga Jews.^[8] Only in the August 1942 issue was there a hint of massacres of Latvian Jews, although Riga went unmentioned:

“In Latvia, a June 15 release revealed, over 25,000 Jews, a quarter of the pre-war population, had been slain by Nazis in the four days following evacuation of Soviet forces last year.”^[9]

This “revelation” is, as shown below in my discussion of the *Einsatzgruppen* and Stahlecker reports, completely at odds with the official version of events, which would have it that less than 1,000 Latvian Jews were killed during the first week of occupation. Moreover, since the events at Rumbula took place in late November/early December 1941 they could hardly have been confused with any events which took place in the preceding summer.

In the issue of December 1942 it was reported:

“The situation of the Latvian Jews was reported increasingly difficult, while a portion of the Jews from the Riga ghetto have been deported to south-eastern Poland. A second ghetto was recently opened in Widau.”^[10]

Mainstream Holocaust historiography needless to say knows nothing of deportations of Latvian Jews to “south-eastern Poland” – which, based on the map of Poland before the war, could well be taken to mean Galicia or Volhynia (both in present-day Ukraine). The mention of the opening of a “second ghetto”^[11] in “Widau” – no doubt a misprint for Windau, the German name of Ventspils, a town in western Latvia, is also highly curious, given that the Jewish population of this town and the surrounding region are claimed to have been exterminated in the autumn of 1941.

The issue of February 1943 carried the following highly interesting notice:

“Systematic deportation of all Jews who remained in Latvia, including those brought from Germany, Holland and Belgium was reported Nov. 19. The first step in the policy of extermination was taken Nov. 28, 1941, according to the Manchester Guardian (Oct. 30), when the Nazis established an ‘inner ghetto’ in Riga, and began to use the main ghetto as a transit camp for Jews from Central Europe.”[\[12\]](#)

Holocaust historians of course know nothing of deportation of Dutch and Belgian Jews to Latvia or any other location in the occupied eastern territories. What is most important to us here, however, is the date on which the “first step in the policy of extermination”, consisting of the establishment of an “inner ghetto” in Riga, took place according to the British newspaper: 28 November 1941. This is indeed the date on which the liquidation of the western section of the Riga ghetto began,[\[13\]](#) followed just a few days later by the reported first mass shooting at Rumbula. Following this event, the remaining Latvian Jews were housed in the northern section of the ghetto, between the streets of Kalna and Ludzas, whereas the southern section, between the streets Ludzas and Maskavas, came to be inhabited by Jewish deportees from the Reich and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.[\[14\]](#)

The *Manchester Guardian* article was also referenced by the following notice in the *JTA Daily News Bulletin* on 20 November 1942 (datelined “London, Nov. 19”) :

“Jewish relief organizations here today received information that all Jews living in the ghetto in Riga, Latvia, are being deported to Nazi-held Russian territory and that the Nazi administration has decided to make Latvia ‘judenrein’ within the next few weeks.

Jews from Holland, Belgium and Germany who were deported to the Riga ghetto are among those being sent further east. Neutral non-Jews who visited the Baltic States recently attempted to ascertain to where the Jews from the Riga ghetto were being exiled, but no information could be secured from the local non-Jewish population which is afraid to furnish any information about the fate of their former Jewish neighbors. Letters sent to Jews in the Riga ghetto from neutral countries have been returned recently stamped with a notice from the postal authorities that the recipient has ‘left for the East.’

The Manchester Guardian publishes a comprehensive survey of the Jewish situation in Latvia revealing that large transports of Jews were sent to the Riga ghetto from Berlin, Cologne, Dusseldorf and other German cities. ‘The fate of these German Jews is not known since they were also deported recently from the ghetto in Riga to some unknown destination,’ the English paper writes. It estimates that only 4,000 Riga Jews were still left in the ghetto after the terrible massacres carried out by the Nazis in the Latvian capital. Before the Nazi occupation there were about 50,000 Jews in Riga, constituting one-half of the entire Jewish population in Latvia.”[\[15\]](#)

Due to its importance I will here reproduce the 30 October 1942 *Manchester Guardian* article in full:

“FATE OF THE JEWS IN LATVIA

Another Chapter in the Record of Nazi Savagery

From our Special Correspondent

Since the occupation of Latvia by the Germans at the beginning of the Russian campaign in June and July, 1941, the Jews of that country have been known to be in acute danger. Owing largely to the

extraordinary precautions taken by the invaders to prevent the leakage of information, reliable details about the fate of the Jewish population have only recently become available. The facts now revealed conform in every particular to the all-too-familiar pattern of German persecution.

On June 16, 1941, the retreating Russians collected together between two and three thousand Jews and sent them to the Russian interior. These, however, represented but a small proportion of the total Jewish population of Latvia, which was estimated at approximately 100,000 persons. Of these about 32,000 lived in Riga. The Germans entered Riga on July 1 and forthwith laid hands on Jews and compelled them to do various menial tasks. This continued for several days, the Jews being seized upon wherever they appeared. With one exception there was as yet no organised anti-Semitic drive. The exception was provided by the Latvian auxiliary police, a body evidently open to German influence even before the invasion. Members of this band on the night of July 3–4 forced their way into numerous Jewish houses and flats in Riga, looting wherever they went.

MIGRATION AFTER POGROM

By the end of July the 'system' had begun to work and most of the male Jews of Riga had been herded into labour groups. During August large numbers of women were also conscripted to work for the Germans. Meanwhile an organised pogrom in the provinces had caused the deaths of literally thousands of Jews. There were frequent instances of the only Jewish family in a particular village being completely wiped out either by the Germans or by their Latvian auxiliaries. Consequently there began a great migration towards Riga, evidently inspired by the hope that conditions might be better in a more densely populated area.

Large numbers of those who set out never reached their goal and those who did were doomed to bitter disillusionment, for at the beginning of September the Germans announced their intention of setting up a ghetto in the Moscow suburb, into which all the Jews in Riga would have to go. They were evicted from their homes during the first three weeks of October and on the 25th of that month the ghetto was sealed with a fence of wood and barbed wire.

GHETTO OVERCROWDING

Terrible scenes accompanied this mass 'evacuation'. The victims were allowed to bring with them from their homes one chair per person, one bed for every two persons, a table and a cupboard per family. Accommodation in the ghetto was theoretically allotted on the basis of three square yards of ground room to each person but it did not work out in practice. As a rule about sixteen persons had to share a comparatively small room, sleeping five in a bed. Foodstuff and rations, such as they were, were distributed from seventeen shops. The administration of the ghetto was placed in the hands of a council, selected from prominent members of the Jewish community in Latvia. (The names of those comprising the council are in the possession of your correspondent.) In addition to their own and the Latvian police the Germans installed a corps of Jewish police in the ghetto.

Every morning 16,000 Jews left the ghetto in columns for their place of labour. Some did restoration work, some worked for units of the German Army or the S.S., while others were employed in the industry. They received no recompense whatever, and as all the inmates of the ghetto had to pay for their own food their physical condition deteriorated as time went on.

On November 28 the Germans decreed that a section of the ghetto was to be reserved for occupation by some 4,000 Jews engaged on work for the Army and the S.S. These were duly separated from their families, incarcerated in the 'inner ghetto' and surrounded by additional barbed wire entanglements. A further order was issued on November 29 by which only able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 60 were to remain in the camp, the others being transferred over a period to separate 'lagers.'

The four thousand of the 'inner ghetto' were still there in June of this year. As for the main ghetto, it remained empty for a few days only, after which came new arrivals – Jewish deportees from Germany, including many from Berlin, Cologne, and Düsseldorf. By the end of June they too had departed no one knows whither. The gates of the ghetto were open again in readiness for more human victims.”[\[16\]](#)

Aside from the claim that only 2–3,000 Jews had left the country by the time Latvia was occupied, the historiographically unknown – and rather improbable – assertion about a “great migration” of provincial Latvian Jews to Riga in August 1941, and the factually incorrect claim that the Jews deported to Latvia from the Reich had all been evacuated from the Riga ghetto by June 1942, the “special correspondent” of the *Manchester Guardian* displays a remarkably detailed and accurate knowledge of the Riga ghetto: he is aware not only of the Jewish ghetto police, but of the approximate number of Latvian Jews remaining in the “inner ghetto” (their actual number as of February 1942 was 4,358, see Section 2 below), that many of the Reich Jewish deportees came from Berlin, Cologne, and Düsseldorf,[\[17\]](#) and that some 16,000 Riga Jews were employed as forced labor prior to the partial liquidation of the ghetto (in October 1941 a total of 15,650 Jews in the ghetto were classified as “able to work”).[\[18\]](#)

Therefore the fact that the correspondent does not state that the Jews evacuated from the ghetto at the end of December were murdered is all the more extraordinary. While they are spoken of as “victims”, their fate is portrayed as the same as that supposedly suffered by the Reich Jews (“they too had departed no one knows whither”) – that is, deportation to an unknown destination. While one may, by help of the usual Holocaust exegesis, detect here an implication that evacuation from the ghetto equalled death, the most important issue remains: How could the correspondent know so much about the history of the ghetto up to at least spring 1942, but then know nothing whatsoever about the Rumbula massacre nearly a year after the alleged event?

In the *Contemporary Jewish Record* issue of August 1943 it was noted that from “London word came on June 9 that [the famous Jewish historian] Simon Dubnow, 81, was executed in Riga, Latvia, on Dec. 1, 1941”,[\[19\]](#) but this is not mentioned in the context of a larger massacre of Riga Jews.

Only in the issue of December 1943 was it first reported by the *Contemporary Jewish Record* that a large part of the Jews in occupied Latvia had been exterminated by the Germans:

“Earlier reports that wholesale slaughter by the Nazis had wiped out huge numbers of the Jewish population of Latvia, estimated at 94,000 in prewar days, were confirmed by an eyewitness account published in the Swedish paper Ny Dag, on Sept. 1. Surviving Jews were working in war industries on starvation rations, but mass executions still continued among deportees from abroad.

Some 80,000 Jews were said to have been murdered near Chiube, in the woods between Rumbula and Alaspile. Only a few Jews out of 44,000 remained in Riga, and none at all in Daugavpils, Rezekne or Ludza.”

The “earlier reports” had not been reproduced by *Contemporary Jewish Record*, probably because they were not deemed sufficiently reliable. Here the name of Rumbula is mentioned for the first time by the journal. “Alaspile” is most likely a corruption of Salaspils, which is located some kilometers to the east of Rumbula. The article from the Swedish Communist newspaper *Ny Dag*, published on 26 August 1943, stated:

“During the winter 1941–1942 the Germans deported to Riga Jews from Austria, Czechoslovakia, France, and other occupied countries and executed them together with Jews from Riga in the pine forest at Čiube, between the stations of Rumbula and Salaspils.” [\[20\]](#)

On 24 July 1944 the *JTA Daily News Bulletin* carried the following notice:

“A Latvian Jewish woman, who arrived in Sweden recently after hiding from the Gestapo for a year-and-a-half, gave an eye-witness account today of the massacre of Latvian Jews by the Germans and also submitted a list of the 24 persons responsible for the atrocities.

The woman, Selma Anderson, whose family name before her marriage was Shebshelovitz, was saved from the Riga ghetto in November, 1941, on the eve of a wide-spread massacre, by Alexander Anderson, whom she subsequently married. They lived in Latvia for more than a year, under the noses of the Gestapo.

At the outbreak of the war, Mrs. Anderson was a student at the English College in Riga. After the German occupation she was forced to work in the ruins of the bombed sections of Riga, and later as a kitchen maid in S.S. headquarters. In October, 1941, she was placed in a ghetto together with her parents, Josif and Emma. Here, seven persons had to live in a room nine yards square.

She reveals that in the first weeks of the occupation 26,000 Jews were murdered in the provinces, and the rest fled to Riga where further thousands were killed. Latvian guards fired into the ghetto houses at random, daily, killing hundreds. Many were beaten to death. Women were raped. Some Latvian policemen, students, hooligans and dregs from the Riga underworld participated in the atrocities.

About 15,000 Jews were killed in the first wholesale massacre in Riga, in the courtyard of the Qadrat [sic] Rubber Co. factory outside the city, on November 27, 1941. Several thousand were murdered in a second massacre on December 7. After that only Jews employed in the German war factories remained in the ghetto, which was finally liquidated in the Autumn of 1943, when the survivors were taken to Kaizerwald. Their fate is not known.” [\[21\]](#)

This “Selma Anderson” is identical with Selma or Selda Šebšelovicz (also transcribed Schepschelovitz), a young Latvian Jewess who, after living under a false identity in the home of a Latvian officer, Jānis Vabulis, and working in the offices of the Arājs Commando – which functioned as an auxiliary unit under *Einsatzkommando 2* – escaped to Sweden in April 1944. [\[22\]](#) Both Šebšelovicz and Vabulis, who had married the former and escaped with her to Sweden, had contacts with pro-Soviet elements in Sweden. [\[23\]](#) It is highly remarkable that Šebšelovicz did not place the massacre of the Riga ghetto Jews in the forest at Rumbula, or in any other of the forests surrounding Riga, but in a factory courtyard. Kvadrāts is an industrial area in the Kengarags city district housing the factory of the Baltijas Gumijas Fabrika (Baltic Rubber Factory). It is located on the right side of Maskavas Street facing south and by the Daugava River, some 2.5 km west-north-west of the Rumbula mass-shooting site.

The propagandists of the Soviet Union also made a few statements on massacres of Riga Jews during the war. In a "Statement issued on December 19, 1942, by the Information Bureau of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R. on 'The execution by Hitlerite authorities of the plan to exterminate the Jewish population in the occupied territory of Europe'" we read the following:

"Soon after their invasion the Hitlerites shot more than 60,000 Jews in Riga, including many who had been brought from Germany, carrying out the shootings almost continuously. Parties of 300 to 400 persons were taken to an island in the western Dvina River (Drucava), eight miles from Riga, and also to the highway leading from Riga to Daugavpils.

Whole families were shot. Children were snatched from their mothers' arms and murdered before their eyes or thrown alive into pits and ditches dug beforehand. There are now no more than 400 Jews in Riga, living in a ghetto surrounded by barbed wire, access to which is prohibited. This group of Jews is doomed to death by starvation and is slowly dying out."[\[24\]](#)

The "highway leading from Riga to Daugavpils" is the same as Maskavas Street, whereas Dvina is the Russian name for the Daugava river which flows through Riga. "Drucava" is most likely a corruption of Daugava, as there exists no other island in the river in the Riga region with a similar name.

One of the earliest sources on the liquidation of the Riga ghetto was a report left in Geneva on 1 October 1942 by Gabriel Ziwan (Ziwian), a young Jew (b. 1923) who had escaped from the ghetto in December 1941. The report was drafted for representatives of the World Jewish Congress in Bern, which subsequently submitted it to the US Consul in Geneva. The relevant part of it reads:

"Such was the situation until November 28th. On that date an order was issued according to which a certain part of the Ghetto was to be cleared from its inhabitants. All Jews who had been living so far in this part of the Ghetto were to be placed in the other part. The district thus cleared was again separated by a fence and was called the 'small Ghetto.' The intention was that all men working for the German authorities outside the Ghetto should live in [the] future in this newly established 'small Ghetto.' The women and families of these men were to remain in the old, so-called 'large Ghetto' which of course was now smaller than before.

On November 29th, an additional order was issued, saying that all men able for work and between the age of 18 and 60 years had to line up in a street near the newly established small Ghetto on November 30th, while the rest of the population would be sent to camps. Each person was allowed to take along 20 kg. of luggage. On November 30th, the announced selection among the male population took place. All people over 60 and all people ill or disabled were sent home to the large Ghetto and also all doctors were sent home. The result of the selection was that as from November 20th, about 4,000 men were settled in the 'small Ghetto.' [...]

In the night of November 30th, all people living in one part of the large Ghetto, numbering 8,000, were assembled. They had their luggage of 20 kg with them. They had to stand there during the whole night without shelter and in the early hours of the morning of December 1st, they were led away by Latvian auxiliary police under German supervision. They had to pass along the fence which separated the large Ghetto from the 'small Ghetto,' so that the men inside the 'small Ghetto' were seeing what was going on. During their march, the group of 8,000 was treated with the utmost brutality. Those who were unable to

keep pace were shot. The group of 8,000 was led to the woods, the so-called wood of Bickern and the wood near Zarnikau and there all the 8,000 were shot.

After this mass-execution, only 16,000 Jews remained in the old Ghetto. In the following week nothing special happened. Only 800 women were arrested some day, 400 were imprisoned while the other 400 returned some time later to the Ghetto.

On December 7th, an order was issued that all women had to be at home by 7 o'clock in the evening. In the night of December 7th to December 8th, the 16,000 people still in the old Ghetto were assembled and taken away, just like the 8,000 a week before.

According to a statement of the commander of the Latvian Ghetto-guard who later told about these things to some people with whom he took drinks, the 16,000 people were led to the woods. Russian prisoners of war had to dig trenches 3 to 4 meters deep. Then the men were separated from the women and children, each group standing to one side of the trenches. Anything of any value they possessed had to be laid down at a certain spot. Then the 16,000 had to undress so that the men were completely naked while the women were allowed to keep their shirt. All the clothes had to be put down and were collected by the police. Then the naked men were ordered to lie down in the trenches after which 5 or 6 German soldiers with machine-guns arrived and shot the men lying in the trenches. The next group had to lie down on the bodies and was shot in the same way. Women and children suffered the same fate.

That is how the rest of the population of the larger Ghetto of Riga was killed in the night from December 7th to December 8th, 1941. This report coming from the Latvian Ghetto-commander was later confirmed by a number of members of the Latvian police who were present.”[\[25\]](#)

In an attachment to his report Ziwan further stated:

“The statement concerning the execution of the Jews of Riga, who were taken away from Riga in the nights of November 30th to December 1st and from December 7th to December 9th [...] is based on a conversation I have had personally at the end of December 1941, with Captain OZOLIN, Commander of the Latvian Ghetto guard, to whom I had been introduced as a Latvian by Mr. Janis Dulebo of Riga, who has helped me in hiding outside the Ghetto. All the facts I have mentioned in the report with regard to the execution of the Jews of Riga have been communicated to me by Mr. Ozolin.”[\[26\]](#)

It is rather remarkable that Ziwan and, supposedly, his informer Ozolin, identified the site of the massacre as the Biķiņnieku Forest, since this is located some 5–6 km north-north-west of Rumbula. “Zarnikau” is most likely a corruption[\[27\]](#) of Carnikava, a municipality immediately to the north-east of the Riga city limits,[\[28\]](#) more than 11 km to the north of Rumbula. As for Biķiņnieku, this forest (called Bickern or Hochwald in German) was reportedly used as a site for smaller mass shootings of Jews before as well as after the events at Rumbula, but bringing tens of thousands of Jews there at the same time would not only have been logistically more challenging, but also attracted considerable attention from the civilian population, as noted by Angrick and Klein:

“It is to be assumed, however, that from the start Bikernieki was clearly not an option. This location had already achieved a notorious ‘renown’ among Riga’s population and could no longer be used, for reasons of secrecy. Moreover, due to the ghetto’s location, a southern solution was to be preferred so as to avoid marching the Jews through the heart of Riga in the process of ‘resettling’ them.”[\[29\]](#)

According to Bert Hoppe and Hiltrun Glass, the commander of the Latvian ghetto guard was in fact named Alberts Danskops. They conclude that the actual informant was Eduard Ozoliņš, a railway worker posted at the Šķirotava station, which is the station before Rumbula station travelling from Riga central station (cf. Figure 1 above).^[30] If this identification is correct, then Ziwjan's identification of the mass killing site becomes fully incomprehensible, as someone who worked so close to the Rumbula site could not have possibly confused it with Biķernieku!

Finally I will take note of an example of brazen forgery in connection with Rumbula. In the supposedly contemporary diary entries of the Baltic-German Riga resident Jürgen E. Kroeger, the Rumbula massacre appears in the following way:

"1 December 1941. Today 30,000 Jews, mainly Jews from Vienna and the Altreich, were killed by the Security Police with the active help of Latvian execution commandos near Salaspils. Even though the operation was kept secret the horrible truth soon got out. The city is transfixed."^[31]

What is remarkable here is of course the claim that the majority of the victims were Reich Jews, in contrast to mainstream historiography which has it that only 1,000 of the 25,000–28,000 victims were Reich Jews – moreover Jews from Berlin, not Vienna. Also, if the massacre had already become common knowledge on 1 December 1941, then it would certainly have been known that a large portion of the ghetto inhabitants had been marched out of the city (since this could easily have been observed by residents living along Maskavas Street), making it unlikely that anyone would have believed the majority of the victims to be Reich Jews. It is also suspicious that the victim figure mentioned (30,000) is very close to the officially held one, despite the fact that the reported second mass shooting on 8 December had still not occurred.

Kroeger's assertion that the "horrible truth soon got out" can be contrasted with what Andrew Ezergailis writes on the public's knowledge of the massacre:

"Of course many Latvians knew about the Rumbula Action because many Latvian policemen participated in it. But it is surprising how many Riga inhabitants did not. The police appear not to have gossiped as widely about it as the Germans thought they would. The burning of the corpses Himmler ordered in 1943 attracted more attention because of the smoke and the stench."^[32]

He adds in a note to this passage:

"From my own survey of Riga inhabitants who live in exile, I would have to say that half of them know nothing of Rumbula; they hardly knew that a ghetto existed. The ones who know something about Rumbula know it from some friend or family member who had police connections."^[33]

I will return later in this study to the problem of keeping the reported mass murder of nearly 30,000 people a secret.

What definitely exposes Kroeger's reports on this issue as fraudulent is his entry for 19 December 1941. Here he describes a supposed personal meeting with the *Gebietskommissar* of the City of Riga, Hugo Wittrock, during which the latter tells him about the mass shootings:

"The truth is awful! A minority of Latvian right-wing extremists have, with the approval and leadership of German SS, exterminated the Jews in the countryside and in the district cities. Later nearly 100,000 Jews,

part of them evacuated here from the Altreich and Vienna, have been murdered by the SS with Latvian assistance in the vicinity of Riga.” [\[34\]](#)

As we will see below, the official version of events has it that less than 40,000 Jews had been killed in or near Riga by this point in time, of whom only 1,000 were non-Latvian Jews, all deported from Berlin. Considering moreover that 100,000 is in excess of the total pre-war Jewish population of Latvia in its entirety, the statement attributed to Wittrock (who at the time of the publication of Kroeger's diary in 1973 had conveniently been dead for fifteen years) is patent nonsense. As it is impossible that Wittrock could have been so misinformed, and since he would have had no reason to make up such lies, it is clear that Kroeger must have forged this and most likely also the 1 December 1941 entry.

3. The Victims – Their Theoretical Maximum Number and Demography

Andrew Ezergailis has the following to say on the Rumbula victims figure:

“In general there is little dispute about the numbers killed at Rumbula. The numbers have ranged from the 20,000 mentioned as a minimum by Jeckeln at his trial to about 30,000 claimed by Max Kaufmann. Certainly almost 25,000 people perished on November 30 and December 8, of whom 24,000 were Latvian Jews.

There are various ways of calculating this: 1) Prior to the killings of Rumbula there were about 29,000 Jews in the ghetto. About 5,000 (more than 4,500 men and about 500 women) were held back for labor; the number comes to about 24,000; 2) A thousand persons per column every half hour on both killing days, from 6:00 in the morning to 12:00 noon, were sent out from the ghetto to Rumbula—the number again comes out to about 24,000. 3) After the killings Jeckeln had told Degenhart that 22,000 rounds of ammunition had been used at Rumbula. Noting that on the two days over 1,000 people were killed within the ghetto and on the road to Rumbula, the number adds up to just below 24,000. In addition to the 24,000 Latvian Jews killed, one must add 1,000 German Jews who were liquidated there on the morning of November 30.” [\[35\]](#)

As we will see below, Ezergailis's contention that “in general there is little dispute about the numbers killed at Rumbula” is refuted by what one would expect to be the most authoritative source on this issue, namely German documents. Besides these, early post-war Soviet investigators came to the conclusion that no fewer than 38,000 victims of mass murder had been buried at the Rumbula site. [\[36\]](#)

The particular issue of the convoy of German Jews will be discussed in full in the next part of this study.

Let us begin by pointing out that Ezergailis's method for establishing the number of victims is clearly flawed, because judging by his notes there exists no document regarding any amount of ammunition ordered or used at this point in time, only a witness statement (apparently from Jeckeln's Chief of Staff, SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Herbert Degenhardt [\[37\]](#)), and moreover it is absurd to use such a statement as a criterion of judgement, as it is well-known among soldiers that shots to the head or neck are far from always certainly fatal – even if keeping to a “one person – one bullet” policy (as claimed for Jeckeln) the person in charge of the mass murder would have ordered a considerable surplus of ammunition (say 10 % or more), and a large part of this surplus ammunition would almost certainly have been used.

How many Jews were then evacuated from the Riga ghetto on 30 November and 8 December 1941, and how many of these reached the Rumbula site? The establishment of the Riga ghetto began in early

August 1941 but was not completed until the beginning of October that same year. The “Resettlement Office” in charge of organizing the resettlement of Riga’s Jews within the ghetto’s borders was informed in early August that the ghetto was to offer space for just under 30,000 people, and according to a census of the civilian administration undertaken at around the same time “approximately 27,000” were to be relocated to the ghetto, which was located in the poor district of Maskavas Vorštate south-east of the Riga central railway station, where 1,700 Jews were already residing, making for a total of some 28,700 ghetto inhabitants.^[38]

Once the settlement had been completed in early October 1941, the Labor Office compiled statistics showing the population of the ghetto to amount to 29,602 Jews.^[39] A census from 16 February 1942, two and a half months after the liquidation of the “Large ghetto”, gave the number of Jews in the “Latvian ghetto” as 4,717, of whom 524 were women.^[40] This figure, however, explicitly included also Lithuanian Jews. 359 Jewish workers were deported from Kaunas to Riga on 6 February 1942.^[41] This brings down the number of remaining Latvian Jews in Riga to 4,358, including apparently some 300 women.^[42] The relevant difference between the October and February figures is thus (29,602-4,358=) 25,244. From this we must subtract some further categories. First, it is stated by witnesses that in all some 300 Jews who had either committed suicide during the evacuation or been shot while trying to escape or for being perceived as causing problems during the long walk to Rumbula were buried in the Jewish Cemetery on 30 November.^[43] During the second evacuation on 8 December many of the remaining ghetto inhabitants tried to delay the operation for as long as possible; as a result units of Latvian militia auxiliaries (the “Arājs Commando”) were sent into the ghetto to force the evacuation; it is further reported that Jews unable to be transported were shot in their apartments or in the ghetto hospital. According to Angrick and Klein, “around 900 corpses were taken to the Jewish cemetery by the Jewish labor commandos, while scores of corpses were left lying in their apartments”.^[44]

Andrew Ezergailis on the other hand estimates the number of Jews killed in the ghetto during the second evacuation at only some 300.^[45] Finally, Jews who had been hiding in the liquidated part of the “Large ghetto” after the operation were taken to be shot at the Jewish cemetery – although some eyewitnesses assert that they were taken instead in buses to the mass shooting site in the Biķiernieki forest.^[46] Angrick and Klein in this case give as a minimum 200 victims but mention a witness (Max Kaufmann) speaking of a total of 500 victims. While the above figures are all primarily derived from Jewish eye-witness testimony and therefore likely to be at least somewhat exaggerated, there can be little doubt that they are at least partially based on reality. I will here use a rough estimate of 800–1,200 deaths outside of the Rumbula site. This leaves a maximum victim figure of 24,044–24,444. To this should then be added the 1,000 Berlin Jews reportedly murdered at Rumbula on 30 November, bringing the maximum total victim figure at Rumbula to approximately 25,000–25,400.

What then do we know about the demographic makeup of this group of alleged Latvian-Jewish Rumbula victims? In the already mentioned October 1941 Labor Office report on the ghetto population we find the following demographic breakdown:^[47]

Table 1: Labor Office statistics on the Riga ghetto population, October 1941

1. Children up to 14 years of age		
Boys	2,794	

Girls	2,858	
Total		5,652
2. Those able to work, age 14–65		
Men	6,143	
Women	9,507	
Total		15,650
3. Those unable to work		
Men	2,069	
Women	6,231	
Total		8,300
	Total	29,602

From another German report we know that there were 2,660 Jews in the ghetto categorized as skilled workers, including 1,300 female tailors.^[48] Since as already mentioned only some 300 female Latvian Jews, like the remaining men all workers, remained in Riga after 8 December, and since this group included not only female tailors but also an unknown number of seamstresses and furriers,^[49] we have to estimate that some 1,100 skilled female workers were among the Jews brought to Rumbula, and moreover that only about a third of the male Latvian Jews remaining after the evacuations had previously been classified as skilled workers. In addition to the 1,100 skilled female workers the alleged victim group would have included approximately $(9,507 - 1,100 =)$ 8,407 unskilled female workers as well as 6,231 elderly women or women otherwise deemed unfit for work.

As for the 5,652 children, we know little about their internal demographics. It is merely known that four schools, three kindergartens, and one nursery were established in the ghetto.^[50] From this we may infer that small children and toddlers as well as school children were present in the ghetto – which should hardly surprise. Since up until the end of November 1941 virtually only adult Jewish men had been targeted for mass shootings (real or alleged), it seems most reasonable to assume that the number of children (0–13 years of age) was roughly evenly divided among each year of birth, so that there were $(5,652 / 13 =)$ 435 children aged 0–1 years, and so on. It seems likely that the figures were somewhat lower for the 0–2 age span due to the lower natality normally coinciding with the unrest of wartime, but I will nevertheless use the 435 figure to strengthen conclusions from my argument.

Next we must subtract the rough estimate of 800–1,200 deaths outside of the Rumbula site from the respective demographic categories. As already mentioned, this estimate consists of suicides, people who were shot during the some 10-km-long walk from the ghetto for attempting to escape or who broke down from exhaustion during said march, as well as people who kept themselves hidden in the liquidated “Large ghetto” but were ferreted out and executed on 9 December. We have no means of telling if any demographic category was under- or overrepresented among these victims. One might suspect that children would be underrepresented among the suicides, but on the other hand we learn of cases of “family suicides”, where a mother or grandmother killed her children or grandchildren and then

herself, usually by poison.[\[51\]](#) Such child victims would not technically be suicides but for the sake of simplicity I would count them as such. One might similarly expect that the elderly would be overrepresented among those who died along the wayside, yet it is claimed that at least a large portion of the elderly were taken to the Rumbula site in trucks or in blue city buses borrowed from the Riga city traffic administration.[\[52\]](#) Accordingly, the only reasonable way to proceed is to distribute these deaths proportionally. This results in the following break-down of the Jews said to have reached the Rumbula site on 30 November and 8 December.

Table 2: Demographic estimates for the Latvian Jews said to have reached the Rumbula site

1. Children up to 14 years of age		
Boys	2,661– 2,706	
Girls	2,722– 2,767	
Total:		5,383 – 5,473
2. Those able to work, age 14–65:		
Men	1,985– 2,019	
Skilled female workers	1,048– 1,065	
Unskilled female workers	7,722– 7,850	
Total:		10,755– 10,934
3. Those unable to work		
Men	1,971– 2,003	
Women	5,935– 6,034	
Total:		7,906 – 8,037
	Total:	24,044– 24,444

As seen from this table, it is clear that the number of Jews arriving at Rumbula would have included a considerable percentage of people – some 45%, in fact – who were able to work or even skilled workers. Aside from the some 1,050 skilled female workers there were also Jewish males who might be

considered skilled in a very particular way, namely members of the Jewish ghetto police (*Ordnungsdienst*). We will return to this particular group later on.

4. The Documents

4.1. Rumbula in the *Einsatzgruppen* incident reports

The most important contemporary documentary source on the Rumbula Massacre is the reporting of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the Security Police and the SD. Here I will not dwell on the larger issue of the reliability and authenticity of these reports, but will simply present and analyze what they have to say about the events in Riga at the end of November and beginning of December 1941.

Rather remarkably, the event later known as the Rumbula Massacre was not mentioned in the very frequent “incident reports” (*Ereignismeldungen*, hereafter *EM*) of the *Einsatzgruppen* until more than a month after the alleged incident. In *EM* No. 151 of 5 January 1942 may be read:

“The Higher SS and Police Leader in Riga, SS Obergruppenführer Jeckeln, has meanwhile embarked on a shooting action [Erschießungsaktion] and on Sunday, 30 November 1941, about 4,000 Jews from the Riga ghetto and an evacuation transport from the Reich were disposed of [beseitigt]. The action was originally to have been carried out by the Higher SS and Police leader’s own forces, but after a few hours the 20 men of EK 2 who had been detached for security purposes were nevertheless employed in the action.”^[53]

In *EM* No. 155 of 14 January 1942 the event was again mentioned:

“In Latvia there remain Jews only in Riga and Dünaburg. The number of Jews left in Riga – 29,500 – was reduced to 2,500 by an action carried out by the Higher SS and Police Leader Ostland. In Dünaburg there still live 962 Jews who are urgently needed for the labor deployment [Arbeitseinsatz].”^[54]

It must be pointed out that “reduced” is not synonymous with “killed” – this entry thus only states that 27,000 Jews were removed from the city. Nevertheless we will here, for the sake of argument, view the report from an exterminationist viewpoint which assumes that reduction = murder. The victim figure reported on 14 January – (29,500 – 2,500 =) 27,000, not including German-Jewish deportees – is thus (27,000 - 4,000 =) 23,000 victims or 6.75 times higher than the number of killed Riga Jews claimed by the report from 5 January! The statement that the Jewish population of Riga had been reduced from 29,500 to 2,500 was repeated in the summary “Activity and Situation Report” (*Tätigkeits- und Lageberichte*) No. 9 covering the period 1–31 January 1941 (there is no mention of the Riga Jews in the corresponding report for December 1941).^[55] The statement that Jews at this point in time remained only in Riga and Daugavpils is incorrect, since the ghetto in Liepāja still existed (see below).

In the following report, *EM* No. 156 of 16 January 1942, the event was mentioned a third time, with a victim figure drastically lower than the number of removed Jews implied by the 14 August report:

“On 30 November 1941, 10,600 Jews were shot in Riga. The action took place under the command of the Higher SS and Police Leader Ostland. In the execution [of this action] Einsatzkommando 2 participated with 1/20 [i.e. one officer and twenty enlisted 20 men].”^[56]

It is not stated whether this included the (unspecified) number of German-Jewish deportees mentioned in the report from 5 January. Assuming that it is not included, the victim figure drops by 16,400, i.e.

some 60% between *EM* No. 155 and *EM* No. 156. Thus between 5 January and 16 January 1942 the Latvian-Jewish Rumbula “victim figure” reported by *Einsatzgruppe A* shifted from 4,000 to 27,000 to 10,600. Besides this astounding fluctuation in numbers we have the fact that none of the reports mentions the second mass shooting on 8 December 1941.



Figure 2: Latvia during World War II. Detail from GEA-Übersichtskarte Europäisches Rußland 1:3 300 000, GEA-Verlag/Berliner Lithographisches Institut, Berlin 1943. (The borders of the former Republic of Latvia are marked with a dotted blue line).

4.2. The murder of the Jews of Riga, Daugavpils and Liepāja according to the Stahlecker Reports

In the so-called “Second Stahlecker Report”, a general report on the activities of *Einsatzgruppe A* in the Baltic states and White Ruthenia from mid-October 1941 to the end of January 1942 may be read the following about mass shootings of Latvian Jews:

“The total number of Jews in Latvia in the year 1935 was: 93,479 or 4.79% of the whole population. [...]

At the entry of German troops there were still 70,000 Jews in Latvia. The rest had fled with the Bolsheviks. The remaining Jews were very active as saboteurs and arsonists. Thus in Dünaburg [Daugavpils] the Jews set so many fires that a large part of the city was destroyed. [...]

After the terror of the Jewish-Bolshevist rule – in total 33,038 Latvians were deported, arrested or murdered – a large-scale pogrom was to be expected from the population. However, only some thousands of Jews were disposed of by local forces at their own initiative. It was therefore necessary in Latvia to carry out extensive cleansing operations [Säuberungsaktionen] using special units [Sonderkommandos] with the help of selected forces from the Latvian auxiliary police (mostly relatives of deported or murdered Latvians).

Up until October 1941, about 30,000 Jews were executed by these special units. The remaining Jews, still indispensable due to economic importance, were collected in ghettos that were established in Riga, Dünaburg and Libau [Liepāja]. Following the processing of criminal cases on the basis of not wearing the Jewish star, black marketing, theft, fraud, but also on account of preventing danger of epidemics in the ghettos, further executions were carried out afterwards. Thus, on 9 November 1941, 11,034 were executed in Dünaburg, 27,800 in Riga at the beginning of December 1941 by an operation ordered and

carried out by the Higher SS and Police Leader, and 2,350 in Libau in mid-December 1941. At this time there are Latvian Jews in the ghettos (aside from the Jews from the Reich) in:

Riga	approximately 2,500
Dünaburg "	950
Libau "	300." [57]

In the first Stahlecker Report, describing the activities of *Einsatzgruppe A* up until 15 October 1941, it is claimed that up until then a total of 30,025 Jews had been executed in Latvia, of whom roughly 6,000 were in the Riga district, over 11,000 in the Liepāja (Libau) district, 9,256 in the Daugavpils (Dünaburg) district, some 3,000 in the Jelgava (Mitau) district, and finally a small number, about 100–200, in the Valmiera (Wolmar) district. [\[58\]](#) These “districts” are clearly identical to the four *Gebietskommissariate* constituting *Generalbezirk Lettland*.[\[59\]](#) In addition to this, some 500 Riga Jews had been killed in pogroms during the initial period of the occupation, giving a total of 30,525 killed Jews.[\[60\]](#) The document further states that “[o]f the in total some 28,000 Jews remaining in Riga 24,000 have up until now been transferred to the ghetto.”[\[61\]](#) This brings us to yet another statistical contradiction: if only 28,000 Jews remained in Riga on 15 October 1941, how could 27,800 of them have been murdered at the beginning of December, with 2,500 remaining (27,800 + 2,500 = 30,300)?

As has already been pointed out by Carlo Mattogno and Jürgen Graf, the figures mentioned in the second Stahlecker Report are internally contradictory: If one adds the number of Jews killed up to 15 October 1941 (30,525) to the number of ghetto Jews shot (11,034 + 27,800 + 2,350 = 41,184) and the number of Jews still remaining in the three ghettos (2,500 + 950 + 300 = 3,750) one gets a total of 75,459, a number that is higher than that of the Jews reportedly still remaining at the time of the entry of German troops into Latvia (70,000).[\[62\]](#) The unreliability of Stahlecker’s figures is aggravated by the fact that, as mentioned above, there remained 4,358 Latvian Jews in Riga on 16 February 1942, not a mere 2,500.

As for the ghetto in Daugavpils (in German Dünaburg, in Russian Dvinsk) in eastern Latvia, a report from Department II of the General Commissariat of Latvia dated 20 November 1941 stated the number of Jews still present in Daugavpils as 935 (including 173 children, 719 adults able to work, 25 adults unable to work and 18 over 65 years of age).[\[63\]](#) A list of the Daugavpils ghetto inmates dated 5 December 1941 gives the number as 962, a figure which is repeated in *EM* No. 155 from 14 January 1942.[\[64\]](#) This would confirm Stahlecker’s estimate of some 950 Jews remaining in that ghetto, yet it must be pointed out that his claim that 11,034 Daugavpils Jews were executed on 9 November 1941 is contradicted by other statistics. In 1935 there lived 11,106 Jews in Daugavpils.[\[65\]](#) According to reports in the local press from mid-July 1941, at the time of the establishment of the ghetto, the Jews remaining in Daugavpils, including refugees from other parts of Latvia, amounted to some 14,000.[\[66\]](#) The same figure was supposedly reported by the Daugavpils Jewish council at the end of July.[\[67\]](#)

In the so-called Jäger Report on mass shootings carried out by *Einsatzkommando 3* of *Einsatzgruppe A*, predominantly in Lithuania, up until 1 December 1941, we find an entry according to which a subunit of *Einsatzkommando 3* had executed “9,012 Jews, Jewesses and Jewish children” in Daugavpils in the

period from 13 July 1941 to 21 August 1941. [68] According to the recollections of Daugavpils ghetto inmate Sidney Iwens, several hundreds of elderly and sick Jews had been taken from the ghetto to the nearby forest of Pogulianka some 8 km north-west of the city and murdered there on 28 July 1941, [69] some 2,000 Jews on 1 August, [70] a group of 2,000–3,000 people on 6 August 1941, [71] and another large group on 18–19 August 1941. [72] In EM No. 21 from 16 July 1941 one may further read that up until then a total of 1,150 Jews had been executed in Daugavpils by another unit of *Einsatzgruppe A, Einsatzkommando 1b*. [73] While it was asserted by a post-war indictment that these 1,150 Jews were for the most part not from Daugavpils itself but from surrounding communities, [74] it is claimed that another group of 1,150 male Jews from Daugavpils were brought to the city prison on 30 June 1941 and executed soon thereafter. [75]

But if there were approximately 14,000 Jews in Daugavpils when the ghetto was established, and if some 10,000 Jews were been killed between the end of June and the end of August, how then could 11,106 Jews from the Daugavpils ghetto be murdered on 9 November 1941 [76] and there still be 935 Jews left in the city on 20 November? It is worth noting that one of the major Holocaust historians to have written on the subject of the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, Yitzhak Arad, disregards the figure in the second Stahlecker Report and gives the number of victims as 5,000–6,000. [77] Moreover, as seen above, the first Stahlecker Report gave the number of Jews executed in the Daugavpils district up until 15 October 1941 as 9,256. This figure could include the 9,012 Jews shot in Daugavpils according to the Jäger Report, but *not also* the 1,150 Jews reportedly executed by *Einsatzkommando 1b*.

The Daugavpils demographics incongruities get even worse in the light of the fact in early October 1941, i.e. after the reported period of activity of *Einsatzkommando 3* but before the alleged mass shooting on 9 November, the General Commissar of Latvia, Otto-Heinrich Drechsler, wrote a letter to the Reich Commissar of Ostland, Hinrich Lohse, in which the number of Jews in the Daugavpils ghetto is given as merely 2,185. [78] This figure is echoed by an article published in the 12 October 1941 issue of the local newspaper *Daugavas Vēstnesis*, according to which the ghetto population numbered 2,175. [79] But if only some 2,000 Jews lived in the Daugavpils ghetto in October 1941, how then could some 11,000 Jews from the same ghetto have been murdered in November 1941? It must be stressed here that Holocaust historiography knows of no transports of Jews to Daugavpils between October and November 1941.

As for Liepāja (Libau), its Jewish population in 1935 amounted to 7,379. Some additional 300 Jews lived in nearby towns. [80] By June 1941 the number of the Liepāja Jews had decreased to an estimated 7,140. On 14 June 1941 Soviet authorities deported 209 Jews from the city to Siberia, and in the following two weeks about 300 Jews fled to the USSR to escape the German invasion; another 160 local Jewish soldiers and guards retreated with the Red Army, so that some 6,589 Jews remained in Liepāja when the city was captured by German forces on 29 June 1941. [81] In the aforementioned letter of Drechsler's from early October 1941 it is stated that some 5,500 Jews remained in the province of Courland (Latvian. Kurzeme, the western part of Latvia) whose capital is Liepāja, and that these Jews were to be concentrated in a ghetto in Liepāja. In the also abovementioned report of Department II of the General Commissariat of Latvia from 20 November 1941 the number of Jews registered in Liepāja is given as 3,890, of whom 3,002 were adults able to work, 106 adults unable to work and 782 children. According to Holocaust historian Katrin Reichelt the Jews of Liepāja were subjected to the following massacres during 1941: [82]

- Some 100 male Jews shot by Sonderkommando 1a and members of the navy on 4 or 5 July;

- Some 1,430 Jews shot in Rainis Park – right in the middle of the city![\[83\]](#) – from 29/30 June to around 5 July;
- 1,100 male Jews shot by the “Arājs Kommando” on 24 and 25 July;
- Some 600 people shot in September, unclear how many of them Jews;
- 500 Jews in October;
- 2,749 Jewish men, women and children on Šķēde Beach between 15 and 17 December.

For the September massacre Reichelt gives no indication of the number of Jewish victims. Another exterminationist source gives the number of September victims as 300 (elderly) Jews.[\[84\]](#) The above-listed mass shootings thus add up to approximately 6,179 victims. Available documentation shows that on 1 July 1942 there still remained 864 Jews in the Liepāja ghetto,[\[85\]](#) not 300 as indicated by the second Stahlecker Report. If we add the 864 remaining Jews to the some 6,179 alleged victims we get 7,043, a figure that is some 500 higher than the number of Liepāja Jews that originally fell into German hands (approx. 6,589). Yet it would appear that the number of Jews remaining in the city after mid-December 1941 was in fact higher than 864. Subtracting the 2,749 reported victims of the mid-December massacre from 3,890 registered Liepāja Jews at the end of November one gets 1,141, a number which may well have been reduced by “natural” mortality to 864 by July 1942, although Arad (but not Reichelt) asserts that some 200 Liepāja Jews were killed “between February and April 1942.”[\[86\]](#) 1,141 added to the 6,179 alleged victims makes a total of 7,320. It must be pointed out, however, that the figure of 2,749 victims (as opposed to the Stahlecker figure of 2,350) is derived from an activity report of the *SS-und-Polizeistandortführer Libau* dated 29 December 1941, in which it is stated that “2,749 Jews were *evacuated* in the period from 14 to 17 December 1941” (emphasis added).[\[87\]](#)

Latvian Holocaust historians Edward Anders and Juris Dubrovskis have written as follows on their attempt to identify the Jewish victims of the Liepāja massacres (emphasis in original):

“Nearly all [of the 6,589 Jews estimated to have remained in the city] were killed, but even after checking more than a dozen sources, we have direct evidence for the death of only 3,534. For the remaining 3000+ people, we will have to use an indirect method: given a complete list of Holocaust survivors, we would be able to infer that anyone not on this list had perished.

Alas, the survivor's lists are *not* complete.”[\[88\]](#)

The authors have nonetheless identified through the use of various sources a total of 958 Liepāja Jews who still remained in the city in early 1942, while noting that the real number of Jews surviving at this point likely amounted to approximately 1,050. They further conclude that some 800 of these Jews were still alive in the Liepāja ghetto on the eve of its liquidation in early October 1943.[\[89\]](#) Subtracting 1,050 from 6,589 we get 5,539 hypothetical victims for the massacres in 1941, of which at least (5,539 - [2,749 + 500] =) 2,290 pertain to the period before mid-October 1941. Anders and Dubrovskis estimate the number of Liepāja Jews shot during the period July–December 1941 at approximately 5,470.[\[90\]](#)

To summarize: While the second Stahlecker Report claims that only 3,750 Latvian Jews remained at the end of January 1942, reliable documentation shows that this figure in reality amounted to at least 6,184

(4,358 in Riga in mid-February 1942, 962 in Daugavpils in December 1941, and 864 Jews in Liepāja in July 1942).

The unreliability of the figures in the second Stahlecker Report becomes clearly exposed when we examine an appendix to the report containing a breakdown of the “number of executions carried out by *Einsatzgruppe* A up to 1 February 1942” [\[91\]](#), reproduced below (Figure 3).

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Zahlen
für
von der Einsatzgruppe A bis 1.2.1942 durchgeführten
Exekutionen.

	Litauen	Lettl.	Estl.	Weisseruthen.	Altbalttr. Gebiete	Insges.
Juden	136421	35238	963	41828	3600	218050
Durch Programme		5500				5500
Grenzberei- fen Litauen	5502					5502
Kommunisten	1064	2914	4070	311 +)		8359
Partisanen	56	367	400	221 +)		1044
Geisteskranke	653	693	-	298 +)		1644
Sonstige	78	-	30	203 +)		311
	143774 + 5500	39212	5463	42861	3600	240410

+) Zahlen ab 1.12.1941

Geheime Reichsangelegenheit!

Figure 3: Number of executions carried out by Einsatzgruppe A up to 1 February 1942

Here the number of Latvian Jews executed by *Einsatzgruppe A* up until this date is given as 35,238, which would mean that since 15 October 1941 it had executed only an additional (35,238-30,025 =) 5,213 Jews. The figure of 5,500 Latvian and Lithuanian Jews killed through pogroms is identical with the corresponding figure given in the first Stahlecker Report, where it was made clear that only 500 of these pertained to Latvia[92] (as opposed to the statement in the second report that “some thousands” of Latvian Jews had been eliminated through pogroms).

One might argue that the 1 February 1942 total refers only to Jews liquidated by *Einsatzgruppe A* and forces placed at its command, but leaves out killings carried out by, to name the most obvious culprit, the Higher Leader of the SS and Police Ostland (*HSSPF Ostland*, i.e. Jeckeln). This line of reasoning would mean that, based on the figures found in the second Stahlecker Report proper, (70,000 – (2,500 + 950 + 300) =) 66,250 – 35,738 = 30,512 Jews were killed by German forces other than those attached to *Einsatzgruppe A* in the period from the beginning of the occupation to 1 February 1942. Since the Rumbula Massacre, with a reported total victims of some 27,800 is stated to have been carried out by *HSSPF*, one might suppose that the figures add up, at least roughly[93] – but is this really so? In order to arrive at an answer we will have to see first what exactly the *Ereignismeldungen* have to say about killings of Latvian Jews up until February 1942, and then embark on a brief excursus relating to the demographics and fates of the provincial Jews.

4.3. The murder of Latvia’s Jews according to the *Ereignismeldungen* and the Jäger Report

In *EM* No. 15 from 7 July 1941 we read that 400 Jews had been liquidated in Riga through pogroms,[94] whereas another 100 Jews were shot in Riga by a commando of the Security Police and SD as reprisal for the killing of 20 German POWs.[95]

In *EM* No. 24 from 16 July 1941 it is reported that 5 Jews were shot for arson in Daugavpils;[96] moreover 1,125 male Jews were at present imprisoned in the same city and “were to be shot within a short time and in already prepared graves”, whereas 1,150 Jews had already been shot by *Einsatzkommando 1 b* in Dünaburg [Daugavpils]”. [97] As for Riga the same report states that 2,000 Jews (as well as 600 Communists) had been placed in the city’s prison. It repeats the figure of 400 Riga Jews killed through pogroms, adding that 2,300 Riga Jews had been executed since *EK2*’s arrival in the city, “partially by Latvian auxiliary police, partially by own forces”, and that “the prisons will be completely cleared out in the following days”. In “Latvia outside of Riga” another 1,600 Jews had been executed.[98]

In *EM* No. 26 from 18 July 1941 one reads about Rezekne (German: Rositten), a town in northeastern Latvia:

“The larger part of the Jews had escaped to Russia and to the surrounding forests at the time of the entry of the German troops. The arson carried out in the town is for the most part perpetrated by the Jews. At the entry of the German troops some 60 leading Latvians were found in a completely mutilated state. Following this 80 Jews were liquidated. Police Prefect Matsch has taken over the liquidation of the Jews.”[99]

The local Jews were claimed to constitute a “key element of the Communist Party” (“*tragende Element der Kommunistischen Partei*”).[100]

In *EM* No. 40 of 1 August 1941 one reads that “[d]uring the self-cleansing [*Selbstreinigung*] in the territories of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia a total of far more than 20,000 Communists and Jews have up until now been liquidated by self-defense organizations [*Selbstschutzorganisationen*]”. [\[101\]](#)

In *EM* No. 48 of 10 August 1941 *EG A* reports that “[t]he cleansing of the rear army zone, partially with the assistance of Lithuanian and Latvian auxiliary commandos, continues according to plan. In total 29,000 people have been liquidated in these territories.” [\[102\]](#)

In *EM* No. 88 of 19 September 1941 it is mentioned that 172 Jews are currently held in the central prison in Riga and that the clearing-out of the prison is being carried out continuously. [\[103\]](#)

In *EM* No. 96, dated 27 September 1941, it is stated that 459 people had been executed during the period 30 August to 5 September, of whom “237 mentally ill Jews from the lunatic asylums in Riga and Mitau”; it is further stated that the “preliminary total result in the area of *EK 2* [=Latvia] has at this point reached 29,246 people”. [\[104\]](#) There is also mention that the number of Jews currently held in the Riga prison amount to 195 (as compared to 3,462 Communists), [\[105\]](#) and that “[a]t the time, all Jews in Libau are being registered.” [\[106\]](#)

In *EM* No. 131 of 10 November 1941, *Einsatzgruppe A* reports that the “preliminary total result in the area of *Einsatzkommando 2* has hereby reached 31,598.” [\[107\]](#) It is also mentioned that in the period 18–25 October, 6 Jews were executed in Riga (as against 115 Communists), 15 in Valmiera and 18 in Liepāja.

Following *EM* No. 131 there are only the three reports relating to the Riga/Rumbula operation, which have already been discussed (with the exception that *EM* No. 156 also mentions the shooting of 1 (one) Jew in Liepāja).

The so-called Jäger Report, chronicling mass shootings carried out by *Einsatzgruppe A's Einsatzkommando 3* and its subunits and auxiliaries up until the end of 1941, chiefly concerns Lithuania, but there is listed the killing of a total of 212 Jews in the Latvian towns of Dagda and Kraslava (not far from Daugavpils) on 27 August, and the abovementioned execution of 9,012 Jews in Daugavpils between 13 July and 21 August 1941. [\[108\]](#)

Based on the above-listed documentary mentions, one would have to draw the conclusion that out of the 35,238 Jews reported as killed by *Einsatzgruppe A* during the period in question, at least (100 + 1,150 + 2,200 + 6 + 18 + 1 + 212 + 9,012 =) 12,487 refer to the three cities of Riga, Daugavpils and Liepāja, leaving a hypothetical maximum of (35,238 – 12,487 =) 22,751 Jews who could have been executed by *Einsatzgruppe A* and its auxiliaries in the provincial towns and villages.

Excursus I: The Jews in Provincial Latvia

In order to better grasp the demographic context of the events at Rumbula and the figures mentioned in the Stahlecker Reports it is beneficial to take a closer look at data concerning the Jewish population of Latvia as a whole. The last census in Latvia before the outbreak of the war took place in 1935. In this year the Jewish population of the country amounted to 93,479. This figure can be broken down as follows in order of the individual populations (German names of the locations in parentheses): [\[109\]](#)

Table 3: The Jewish Population of Latvia according to the 1935 census

City, town or rural district	Number of Jewish inhabitants
Rīga	43,672
Daugavpils (Dünaburg)	11,106
Liepāja (Libau)	7,379
Rēzekne (Rositten)	3,342
Jelgava (Mitau)	2,039
Ludza (Ludsen)	1,518
Krāslava (Kraslau)	1,444
Ventspils (Windau)	1,246
Krustpils (Kreuzburg)	1,043
Līvāni (Lievenhof)	981
Tukums (Tuckum)	953
Varakļāni (Warkland)	952
Preiļi (Prelen)	847
Jēkabpils (Jakobstadt)	793
Kārsava (Karsau)	785
Bauska (Bausk)	778
Kuldīga (Goldingen)	646
Jaunjelgava (Friedrichstadt)	561
Aizpute (Hasenpoth)	543
Gostiņi (Trentelberg)	504
Talsi (Talsen)	499
Zilupe (Rosenhof)	471
Viļeni (Wilon)	396
Subate (Subbath)	387
Balva (Bolwa)	379
Saldus (Frauenburg)	329
Sabile (Zabeln)	281

Grīva (Griwa)	234
Smiltene (Smilten)	221
Priekule (Preekuln)	193
Jūrmala (Riga-Strand)	181
Cēsis (Wenden)	180
Alūksne (Marienburg)	176
Valdemārpils/Sasmaka (Sassmacken)	159
Auce (Autz)	143
Madona (Modohn)	115
Limbaži (Lemsal)	100
Grobiņa (Grobin)	95
Valmiera (Wolmar)	93
Gulbene (Schwanenburg)	84
Ape (Hoppenhof)	82
Dobele (Doblen)	72
Ilūkste (Illuxt)	71
Kandava (Kandau)	68
Rūjiena (Rujen)	62
Abrene (Abrehnen)	61
Valka (Walk)	57
Ogre (Oger)	50
Piltene (Pilten)	45
Plaviņas (Stockmannshof)	35
Strenči (Stackeln)	27
Sigulda (Segewold)	15
Sloka (Schlock)	10
Ķemeri (Kemmern)	9
Durbe (Durben)	8

Mazsalaca (Salisburg[110])	4
Ainaži (Haynasch)	1
Total for above cities, towns and rural districts	86,554
Other locations	6,925
Total	93,479

As seen above the three largest communities – Riga, Daugavpils and Liepāja – accounted for 62,157 Jews or 66.5% of Latvian Jewry. Of the remaining 31,322 Latvian Jews, 10,632 lived in the six towns of Rēzekne, Jelgava, Ludza, Krāslava, Ventspils and Krustpils, while the rest were dispersed in smaller numbers among a large number of towns and villages.

In Table 4 below I present for reference a *non-exhaustive* list of reported or alleged mass killings of Latvian Jews in rural communities up until mid-October 1941, by which time, according to the first Stahlecker Report, *Einsatzgruppe A* had killed a total of 30,025 Latvian Jews. For many of the smaller provincial Jewish communities the available sources simply state that they were exterminated in the “summer of 1941” or “fall of 1941” or simply “in the second half of 1941”. The survey is based mainly on five scholarly sources published after the year 2000: Geoffrey P. Megargee, Martin Dean (eds.), *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos 1933–1945, Volume II: Ghettos in German-Occupied Eastern Europe, Part B* (op.cit.), which I will abbreviate in the table below as “UE”; Shmuel Spector, Geoffrey Wigoder (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life before and during the Holocaust* (New York University Press, New York 2001), in three volumes with running pagination, abbreviated below as “EJL”; and three volumes collecting papers from conferences held by the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, abbreviated below as “LV1”, [111] “LV2” [112] and “LV3” [113] respectively. Only a few massacres of provincial Latvian Jews are alleged to have taken place later than October 1941. 386 Jews are alleged to have been killed in Aizpute on 27 October (EJL, p. 24), whereas, remarkably enough, 26 Jews in Ludza were killed as late as 2 April 1942 (LV1, p. 253).

Table 4: Alleged or reported mass killings of Latvian Jews in rural communities up until mid-October 1941

Date	Victim number/ estimate	Location/community	Source
Late June	~ 135	Skaitskalne	EJL (p. 1188)
4 July	10	Rēzekne	UE (p. 1018)
11 July	80	Jaunjelgava	UE (p. 1005)
12 or 13 July	48	Dobele	UE (p. 1003)
15 July	120	Rēzekne	UE (p. 1018)

16–18 July	300	Ventspils	EJL (p. 1386); M. Deland 2010 (p. 47)
19 July	~ 190	Viesīte	EJL (p. 1395)
24 July	39	Aizpute	EJL (p. 24)
July	~ 600	Kuldīga	UE (pp. 1010–1011)
July	~ 200	Aknīste	EJL (p. 25)
July	~ 46	Iecava	EJL (p. 543)
July	150–200	Saldus	LV2 (p. 136)
July	~ 600	Tukums	EJL (p. 1339)
July	1,550	Jelgava and surroundings	EM No. 40 (1 August 1941)
Second half of July	25	Krustpils	UE (p. 1010)
1 August	~ 400	Krustpils	UE (p. 1010)
1 August	~ 200	Rēzekne	UE (p. 1018)
2 August	350	Jaunjelgava	UE (p. 1005)
3 August	50	Bauska	EJL (p. 93)
4 August	~ 300	Viļāni	EJL (p. 1396)
4 August	540	Varakļāni	EJL (p. 1375)
8 August	200	Smiltene	EJL (p. 1204)
9 August	~ 500	Balvi	EJL (p. 83)
9 August	~ 200	Gulbene/Litene	UE (p. 1005)
12 August	182	Alūksne	EJL (p. 36)
Early August	~ 400–500	Viļaka	EJL (p. 1396); LV3 (p. 94)
20 or 21 August	350–500	Karsava	UE (p. 1009); LV1 (p. 253)
27 August	212	Dagda/Krāslava	Jäger report
July–August	~ 160	Baltinava	EJL (p. 83)

July–August	~ 150	Valdemārpils	LV1 (p. 277)
July–August	157	Nereta and surroundings	LV2 (p. 310)
July–August	~ 700	Preiļi	LV3 (pp. 257–258)
July–August	~ 150	Madona	LV3 (p. 117)
July–August	~ 1,200	Ludza	LV1 (p. 59)
August	~ 2,500	Rēzekne	UE (p. 1018)
August	~ 100	Šķaune	LV1 (p. 254)
Mid-to-late August	~ 70	Jaunjelgava	UE (p. 1005)
Late Summer	~ 125	Vaiņode	EJL (p. 1372)
August–September	150–200	Zilupe	LV1 (p. 254)
12 September	~ 470	Jekabpils	UE (p. 1006)
30 September	~ 800	Bauska	EJL (p. 93)
July, September	~ 80	Limbaži	LV1 (p. pp. 194–195)
September	200	Ventspils	EJL (p. 1386)
End of September	~ 400	Talsi	EJL (p. 1287)
3–17 October	533	Ventspils	EJL (p. 1386)
Total:	~ 15,922– 16,272		

At the onset of the German occupation there lived approximately 34,600 Jews in Riga, [\[114\]](#) 14,000 in Daugavpils, and some 6,500 in Liepāja, making for a total of approximately 55,100, i.e. 7,057 less than the combined 1935 population, suggesting an evacuation ratio of some 11%. If the estimate in the second Stahlecker Report that 70,000 Latvian Jews had remained behind in the country is correct, then there would have remained a mere 14,900 Jews outside of the three main cities, out of the original 31,322, a reduction of more than 50%. One has to consider, however, that at least some thousands of the Jews who found themselves in Riga, Liepāja and Daugavpils in July 1941 were refugees from neighboring provincial settlements. In Daugavpils the number of refugees in the city's ghetto must have numbered at least some 4,000 (assuming that the estimate of 14,000 ghetto inmates is reliable) considering the 1935 Jewish population (11,106) and the city's proximity to the Russian border.

One might argue that changes in population between 1935 and 1941 would make the above estimates unreliable. This, however, is only partially correct. According to demographer Mordechai Altshuler, the Jewish population decreased between 1935 and 1941 by some 3,080 persons due to net emigration and

declining birth rate reflected by aging of the population. Altshuler's estimate should be considered conservative, as by his own admission he does not take into account Jewish emigration to countries other than Palestine and the United States, as well as clandestine emigration to Palestine. It follows that the Latvian-Jewish population by June 1941 amounted to 90,400 at the most. [\[115\]](#)

Is then Stahlecker's estimate of 70,000 remaining Jews reliable? In a paper presented in 2000 the two Latvian historians Edward Anders and Juris Dubrovskis estimate that 1,771 Latvian Jews had been deported to the Soviet interior shortly prior to the outbreak of the war, on 14 June 1941, while another 11,000 Jews were evacuated between 22 and 30 June (the latter figure includes retreating soldiers of Jewish ethnicity). Both of the figures (totalling 12,771) are marked by the authors as "uncertain". [\[116\]](#) As Anders and Dubrovskis accept Altshuler's estimate that the Latvian-Jewish population had declined to 90,400 by mid-1941 they find that some 88,600 Jews remained in Latvia after the deportations on 14 June. They admit, however, that

"The number of Jews who fled to the USSR is very poorly known. Einsatzgruppe A figures for the number of Latvian Jews killed (63,238) and still alive (3,750) by early 1942 total only 67,000, considerably less than the 22 June 1941 population of about 88,600. (Actually, the numbers alive were seriously underestimated, e.g. 350 rather than 1,050 for Liepaja.) Some historians have tried to balance the numbers by assuming that some 20,000 Latvian Jews fled to the USSR. That is clearly too high: in 1944, many Aktionen and Selektionen later, some 4,500 Jews were still left for deportation to Stutthof, so the number in early 1942 probably was 8,000-9,000. That would allow for 12-13,000 refugees, or even fewer if the Einsatzgruppe A total is too low. Indeed, in early 1946, long after most refugees had been free to return to Latvia, only 8,000 Jews lived in Latvia, of whom 3,400 were in Riga. As these included thousands of Soviet Jews, the number of returnees can hardly have exceeded 6,000. The death rate for refugees surely was no higher than that for deportees (1/3), so it is unlikely that more than 10,000 had fled in 1941." [\[117\]](#)

The above argument rests on two dubious assumptions, namely 1) that the victim figures found in the *Einsatzgruppen* reports are to be taken as more or less reliable, and 2) that virtually all of the Jews residing in Latvia in 1946 declared themselves as such in the census. Nevertheless, Anders and Dubrovskis conclude that some 78,000 Latvian Jews remained under German control; of these some 70,000 were shot, 3,500 deported to Stutthof (near Danzig) in 1944, and 3,800 survived in Latvia in camps or in hiding (this makes for a total of 77,300, the remaining 700 being unaccounted for). [\[118\]](#) Yitzhak Arad on the other hand estimates the number of Latvian Jews remaining under German control at 74,000–75,000, implying a higher number of evacuees. [\[119\]](#) In his study *The Displacement of Population in Europe* from 1943 the demography professor E.M. Kulischer estimated the number of Jews evacuated from Latvia at some 15,000. [\[120\]](#)

There exist indications that the number of Jews who escaped or were evacuated from Latvia far exceeded 12,771. In its issue for January–February 1942 the Swedish-Jewish journal *Judisk Krönika* noted that

"According to Deutsche Zeitung im Ostland [an official German newspaper published in Riga] the Russians evacuated 30,000 Jews from Lithuania, 24,000 Jews from Latvia and 1,000 Jews from Estonia at the beginning of the German–Russian war." [\[121\]](#)

If this information is correct, then there would have remained some (90,400 – 24,000 =) 66,400 Latvian Jews under German control, a figure lower than the Stahlecker estimate. Assuming, however, that the evacuation estimate reportedly given by the German newspaper was based on a subtraction of the estimated number of remaining Jews from the 1935 census figure, then the number of remaining Jews would be 69,479, i.e. virtually identical with the Stahlecker estimate.

As for the number of Jews deported to the Russian interior just prior to the outbreak of the war some witnesses mention figures considerably higher than 1,771. According to a book published in 1947 by Riga Jew Max Kaufmann some 5,000 Latvian Jews were deported by the Soviet authorities to the Russian interior on 14 June 1941. [\[122\]](#) Israeli Holocaust historian Dov Levin informs us that the number of people that the Soviets managed to arrest and deport amounted to 34,250. the nationalities of 20,000 of these forced deportees are known: 14,000 were Latvians, 5,000 Jews and the rest other minorities (mainly Poles). [\[123\]](#) If 25% of the identified deportees were Jews, then it seems justifiable to assume that this ratio applied also to the total number of deportees, which would mean that the number of Jews deported by the Soviets in June 1941 may have amounted to some (34,250 x 0.25 =) 8,562, rounded off downward to 8,500. The real number may have been lower but may also have been slightly higher: Levin mentions estimates of 10,000 or more. [\[124\]](#) The figure mentioned by Anders and Dubrovskis (1,771) possibly refers to the deportations on 14 June 1941 alone, although as Levin points out the deportations were carried out over a period of some weeks. It is clear that the Anders-Dubrovskis figure of 78,000 remaining Jews must be reduced by (8,500 - 1,771 =) 6,729 to 71,271.

Andrew Ezergailis speaks of a “major flight of Jews towards the interior of the Soviet Union” following the German attack on the Soviet Union, while noting that the estimates for the number of refugees to the USSR “vary from 10,000 to about 30,000”. This uncertainty, Ezergailis explains, is due to the fact that to this date no documents have been found providing statistics on the evacuations. [\[125\]](#)

One must also consider the problem of the presence of Polish-Jewish refugees in Latvia. According to the Polish Government-in-Exile and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) some 30,000 Polish Jews fled to Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary and Romania following the German occupation of western Poland in 1939, of whom approximately 11,000 went to the bordering Lithuania. [\[126\]](#) Other sources put the number of refugees in the Vilnius region alone to some 14–15,000. [\[127\]](#) According to E.M. Kulischer some 2,000 Polish refugees found their way to Latvia; presumably the majority of these were Jews. [\[128\]](#) Due to the lack of more exact sources we will assume that 1,500 Polish Jews reached Latvia. If as in Lithuania 37–47% of the refugees then left the country before June 1941 [\[129\]](#) there would have remained some 795–945 Polish Jews. As seen above, Anders and Dubrovskis conservatively estimate that 12,771 out of 90,400 Latvian Jews, i.e. 14% were deported or evacuated in June 1941. If this ratio applied also to the Polish-Jewish refugees then there would have been 684-813 left of them under German control, the median of which is 748, rounded off upward to 750. Based on the above considerations we may conclude that there lived at the utmost some 73,000 Jews in Latvia at the onset of the German occupation, which means that the Stahlecker estimate of 70,000 Jews is roughly correct. I will, however, adjust my working estimate of the number of Jews remaining behind in the provincial settlements from 14,900 to 17,900.

4.4. Consequences of the geographic distribution of the reported Jewish victims

Now, if only some 17,900 Jews remained behind in provincial Latvia at the beginning of the German occupation, and if all these Jews were indeed wiped out by units sorting under *Einsatzgruppe A*, then

(35,238 - 17,900 =) 17,338 of the total given in the second Stahlecker Report must refer to the three cities of Riga, Daugavpils and Liepāja. As seen above, the same three cities at the onset of the occupation had a total of approximately 55,100 Jewish residents (approximately 34,600 Jews in Riga, some 14,000 in Daugavpils, and some 6,500 in Liepāja), while in early 1942 a documented (4,358 + 962 + 864) 6,184 of these remained in the same cities, a reduction of some (55,100 - 6,184 =) 48,916.

Since the figure of 17,338 cannot contain the early July shooting by *Einsatzkommando* 1b of 1,155 Jews in Daugavpils, the summer 1941 mass shooting by *EK* 3 of 9,012 Jews in the same city *as well as* the massacre of 11,034 Jews in the same city on 9 November, as reported by the second Stahlecker Report, in addition to the more than 2,000 Riga Jews reported shot (1,155 + 9,012 + 11,034 + 2,300 = 23,501) the only conclusion to be drawn from this statistical basis is that all three Latvian massacres mentioned in the Stahlecker Report (Riga/Rumbula, Liepāja, Daugavpils) must be considered as *not* counted in the second Stahlecker Report's total of 35,238. If added together, the victim figures of these three mass shootings mentioned by Stahlecker amount to 41,184, or 40,184 if subtracting 1,000 Reich Jews possibly included in the 27,800 Rumbula figure. Now, if we add these 40,184 to the 35,238 *Einsatzgruppe* A figure, the 500 reported pogrom victims and the documented number of 6,184 survivors we arrive at a total of 82,106, that is, nearly 10,000 above the number of Jews estimated to have remained in Latvia *in its entirety* at the beginning of the German occupation. Clearly the statistics of the Stahlecker Reports do not hold up.

The first Stahlecker Report contains another contradiction, as it states that 9,256 Jews had been executed in the *Gebietskommissariat* Dünaburg by *Einsatzgruppe* A forces up until 15 October 1941. Yet the number of victims of the Latvian shootings reported in the Jäger Report as carried out by a detachment of *EK* 3 in July–August 1941 (9,224), the shooting of 1,155 Daugavpils Jews by *EK* 1b in early July, and the execution of at least 80 Rēzekne Jews, likewise in early July, add up to 10,459. In addition to the figures found in the incident reports and the Jäger Report, more than 3,000 Rēzekne Jews are alleged to have been murdered by Latvian “self-defence units” in August 1941. [\[130\]](#) In another town in the *Gebietskommissariat*, Ludza, some 800 Jews are alleged to have been murdered on 17 August 1941. [\[131\]](#)

The final blow to the credibility of the Stahlecker statistics comes from a rarely reproduced draft of the infamous “coffin map” attached to the second Stahlecker Report. [\[132\]](#) The draft (Figure 4 below) consists of a more detailed map of the Baltic states and Belarus to which text and figures have been added in pencil. To the upper right is also found, likewise pencilled in, the table of executions from the same report (although with the countries in different order, starting with Estonia instead of Lithuania). There are some small but interesting discrepancies between the draft and the final version:

- The victim figures are not placed within stylized pictures of coffins.
- The Vilnius ghetto (with the figure 15,000 faintly visible to its right) is struck out in the draft but not in the final version. The ghetto of Švenčionys in south-eastern Lithuania is struck out neither in the draft nor in the final version (and also goes unmentioned in the report itself), despite the fact that it is documented to have housed 566 Jews in August 1942, [\[133\]](#) i.e. a considerably higher figure than was indicated for the Liepāja ghetto (300).

- The number of estimated remaining Jews in Weissruthenien was first written as 110,000, then struck out and replaced with the text found in the final version, which gives the figure as 128,000.
- The number of Jews remaining in Minsk is given as 18,000, whereas the final version carries no figure at all. In the report itself it is stated that “about 18 00 Jews” (“*rund 18 00 Juden*”) remained in the Minsk ghetto, excluding Reich Jews deported there.^[134] Since four-digit numbers are written in this way neither in English nor in German it is clear that “18 00” should in fact read “18,000” as on the draft map. According to Yitzhak Arad, however, “[b]etween 45,000 and 46,000 Jews remained in the [Minsk] ghetto” at the beginning of December 1941,^[135] whereas in March 1942 the Minsk ghetto, “the largest in Belorussia, had a population of about 49,000 Jews, including the 7,000 brought there from the Reich”.^[136] How was it possible for Stahlecker to underestimate the number of remaining Minsk Jews by 27,000–28,000?
- The number of Jews shot in the border area between Lithuania and Germany (East Prussia) – 5,502 – is struck out on the draft but not in the final version.
- The Liepāja ghetto is struck out in the draft but absent in the final version.
- Finally, and most importantly for us in this context, under the number of Jews executed in Latvia – 35,238, the same as in the final version– is written in smaller letters “+ 28.000 (*Höh. SS u. Pol.F.*)” (cf. Figure 4 b). This in turn appears to have been written over something else that was then erased. Moreover it is clear that the first digit in the 35,238 figure was initially a “2”, which was then overwritten (rather than erased). In the table, on the other hand, “35 238” appears to be the original figure.

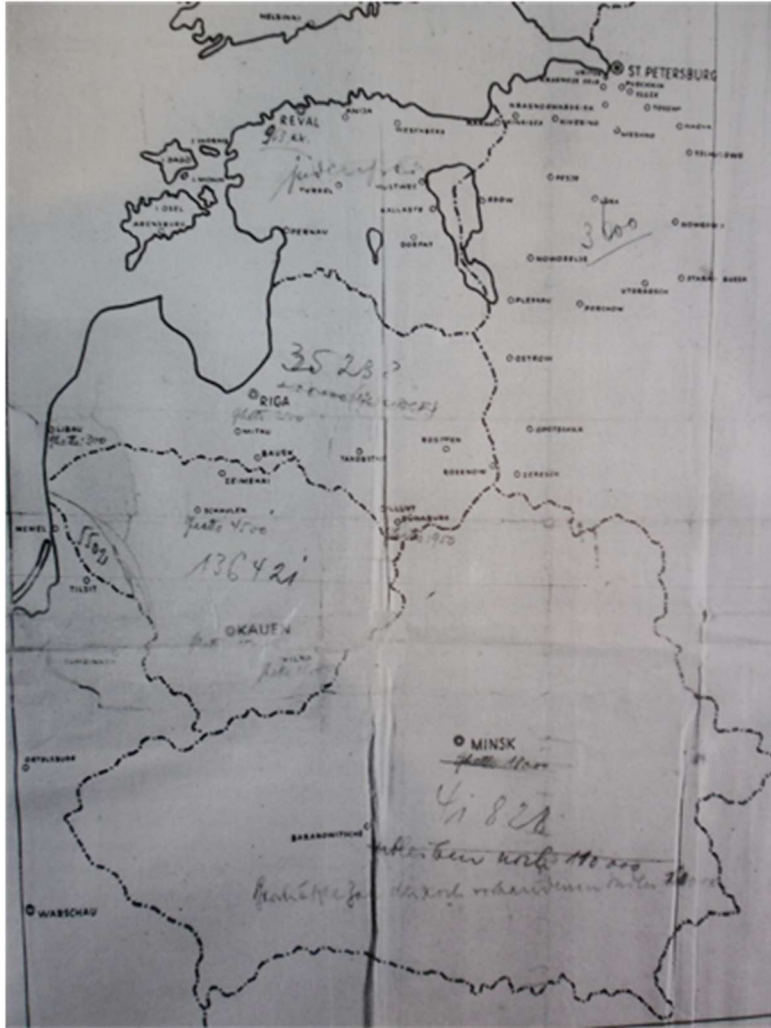


Figure 4: Draft of the “coffin map” from the second Stahlecker Report. [\[137\]](#)

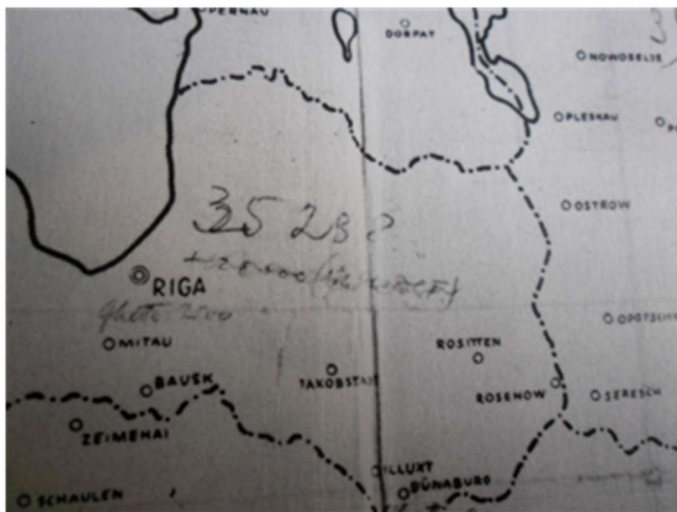


Illustration 4 b: Detail of the “coffin map” draft.

The final discrepancy provides us with a key to the Stahlecker statistics pertaining to the Jews of Latvia at the beginning of 1942. Their numbers and fates can accordingly be summed up thus:

Jews shot by <i>Einsatzgruppe A</i>	35,238
Jews shot by the <i>HSSPF</i>	28,000
Jews killed in pogroms	500
Jews remaining in ghettos	3,750
Total:	67,488

The total here is obviously very close to the number of Jews estimated by Stahlecker to have remained behind at the beginning of the occupation – 70,000. The words “+ 28.000 (Höh. SS u. Pol.F.)” can only be taken to mean that the Rumbula Massacre (whose victim figure is given as 27,800 in the report) *alone* is ascribed to the Higher Leader of the Police and SS. From this follows that both of the two other major post-15-October mass shootings (in Dauvapils and Liepāja in November and December respectively) must fall under the account of *Einsatzgruppe A*. However, if we deduct the victim figures reported by Stahlecker for these two mass shootings from the *Einsatzgruppe A* total of executed Jews at the end of the report period we get (35,238 – 13,384 =) 21,854. But how then could *EG A* and their Latvian helpers have killed 30,025 Jews in Latvia up until 15 October 1941, as stated in the first Stahlecker Report, or “about 30,000 Jews” “up until October 1941” as stated in the second report?

The matter gets even more bizarre when we consider that the *Einsatzgruppe A* total for Lithuania indicated on the “coffin map” – 136,421 – is identical with the number of Jews executed by *EG A Einsatzkommando 3* in Lithuania according to a telegram sent by Karl Jäger to the *EG A* headquarters in Riga on 9 February 1942, [138] which in turn is only slightly higher than the number of Jews listed in the Jäger Report as executed up until 1 December 1941 (135,318). [139] The total of executed Jews in the Jäger Report, however, includes not only 4,934 Reich Jews deported to Kaunas and 3,031 Belorussian Jews shot near Minsk, but also the already mentioned 9,224 Latvian Jews reportedly shot in Daugavpils, Dagda and Kraslava in July and August 1941. But if the Jewish victim figure found in the Jäger Report is contained in the 136,421 figure on the “coffin map”, then these 9,224 Latvian Jews have consequently been erroneously counted among those executed in Lithuania. In turn this would mean that the second Stahlecker Report and the “coffin map” accounts for a total of (67,488 + 9,224 =) 76,712 Latvian Jews – considerably more than the 70,000 Jews estimated by Stahlecker to have been remained in Latvia at the onset of the German occupation. Now, one might argue that 76,712 is closer to our own estimate of some 73,000 Jews remaining in Latvia (including refugees), but if we instead consider the actual number of Jews remaining in the Latvian ghettos, rather than the number reported by Stahlecker, this would bring the total of accounted-for Jews up to 79,146 Jews, making for a surplus of some 6,000 Jews who simply should not be there.

The inevitable conclusion of the above examination is that the statistics found in the Stahlecker Reports are not reliable, but are rather to be understood as statistical fabrications, resulting from exaggerated numbers, bureaucratic confusion, or possibly even from willful falsification. This in turn raises the question: if the Stahlecker Reports present unreliable statistics on the mass killings of Baltic and

Belorussian Jews, is it not then possible that at least some of the Jews reported as exterminated did in fact meet an altogether different fate?

To be continued.

Notes:

- [1] Cf. Herbert Tiedemann, “Babi Yar: Critical Questions and Comments”, in Germar Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust, The Growing Critique of “Truth” and “Memory”*, 2nd rev. ed., Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2003, pp. 501–528.
- [2] Cf. my article “The Maly Trostenets “Extermination Camp” – A Preliminary Historiographical Survey” published in two parts in [Inconvenient History vol. 3 \(2011\) no. 1](#) and [2](#).
- [3] Geoffrey P. Megargee, Martin Dean (eds.), *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos 1933–1945, Volume II: Ghettos in German-Occupied Eastern Europe, Part B*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington (IN) 2012, pp. 1020–1021.
- [4] Bernhard Press, *The Murder of the Jews in Latvia 1941–1945*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston (IL) 2000, pp. 103–106.
- [5] Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944 – The Missing Center*, Historical Institute of Latvia/USHMM, Riga 1996, p. 241.
- [6] Andrew Ezergailis, Harold Otto, Gvido Augusts, *Nazi/Soviet Disinformation about the Holocaust in Nazi-Occupied Latvia*, Latvijas 50 Gadu Okupācijas Muzeja Fonds, Riga 2005, pp. 110–111.
- [7] *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 5, nr 1 (February 1942), p. 77.
- [8] *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 5, nr 2 (April 1942), p. 190.
- [9] *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 5, nr 4 (August 1942), p. 422.
- [10] *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 5, nr 6 (December 1942), p. 630.
- [11] It is further unclear what is meant by “second ghetto”. Second to a previous one on the same location, or second to the Riga ghetto? In the latter case, it is odd, though not unthinkable, that the existence of the ghettos in the cities of Daugavpils and Liepāja would have escaped the attention of the CJR chroniclers.
- [12] *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 6, No. 1 (February 1943), p. 67.

- [13] Andrej Angrick, Peter Klein, *The "Final Solution" in Riga. Exploitation and Annihilation, 1941–1944*, Berghahn Books, New York/Oxford 2009, p. 137.
- [14] Cf. map of the Riga ghetto in *ibid.*, p. 217.
- [15] "Nazis Decide to Make Latvia "Judenrein", Deport All Jews from Riga Ghetto", *JTA Daily News Bulletin*, 20 November 1942, p. 2.
- [16] *The Manchester Guardian*, 30 October 1942, p. 8.
- [17] Cf. A. Angrick, P. Klein, *The "Final Solution" in Riga*, *op.cit.*, p. 219.
- [18] *Ibid.*, p. 111.
- [19] *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol. 6, nr 4 (August 1943), p. 413.
- [20] Quoted in Andrew Ezergailis (ed.), *Stockholm Documents. The German Occupation of Latvia 1941-1945. What Did America Know?*, Historical Institute of Latvia, Riga 2002, p. 472.
- [21] "Latvian Jewish woman who fled to Sweden reveals massacre of Riga Jews", 24 July 1944, p. 2.
- [22] Mats Deland, *Purgatorium. Sverige och andra världskrigets krigsförbrytare (Purgatory. Sweden and the War Criminals of World War II)*, Atlas, Stockholm 2010, p. 74, 77.
- [23] *Ibid.*, p. 78, 96.
- [24] *Soviet Government Statements on Nazi Atrocities*, Hutchinson & Co, London 1945, p. 60.
- [25] Statement of Gabriel Ziwan, pp. 4–6. Hopper and Glass gives the archival source of this official English translation as: AJA, The World Jewish Congress Collection, Series H: Alphabetic Files, 1919–1981, Sub-Series 1: Alphabetical Files, A–Z, 1919, 1924–1929, 1931–1981, Box H 329, File 9, Switzerland, Warnings of Extermination of Jews, Baltic States, Statement of Ziwan, Gabriel, 1942. It is available in facsimile online: http://www.rumbula.org/Statement_of_Gabriel_Ziwan.pdf
- [26] *Ibid.*, page 2 of addendum on sources.
- [27] The letter c is in Latvian pronounced as [ts̺].
- [28] Cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carnikava_municipality
- [29] A. Angrick, P. Klein, *The "Final Solution" in Riga*, *op.cit.*, p. 132.
- [30] Bert Hoppe, Hiltrun Glass (eds.), *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945, Band 7: Sowjetunion*

mit annektierten Gebieten I. Besetzte sowjetische Gebiete unter deutscher Militärverwaltung, Baltikum und Transnistrien, Oldenbourg Verlag, Munich 2011, note 27 on p. 672.

- [31] Jürgen E. Kroeger, *Eine baltische Illusion: Tagebuch eines Deutsch-Balten aus den Jahren 1939–1944*, Nordland-Druck, Lüneburg 1973, p. 69. The passage reads in original: "Die Sicherheitspolizei hat heute unter tätiger Mithilfe lettischer Hinrichtungskommandos in der Gegend von Salaspilsungefähr 30 000 Juden ermordet, hauptsächlich Juden aus Wien und dem Altreich. Obschon die Aktion geheimhalten wurde, sickerte die grausige Wahrheit bald durch. Die Stadt liegt wie gelähmt da."
- [32] A. Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944*, op.cit., p. 262f.
- [33] Ibid., note 93 on p.272.
- [34] J. E. Kroeger, *Eine baltische Illusion*, op.cit., p. 71. The passage reads in original: "Die Wahrheit ist schlimm! Eine Minderheit lettischer Rechtsextremisten hat unter Billigung und Führung der deutschen SS die Juden auf dem flachen Lande und in den Kreisstädten ausgerottet. Später sind von der SS mit lettischer Unterstützung beinah 100 000 zum Teil aus dem Altreich und Wien hierher evakuierte Juden in der Umgebung Rigas ermordet worden."
- [35] A. Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944*, op.cit., p. 262.
- [36] *Latvija pod igom natsizma. Sbornik arkhivnykh dokumentov*, Evropa, Moscow 2006, p. 10.
- [37] Ezergailis does not provide a source for this, but considering that Degenhardt stood trial in West Germany in the 1960s it seems most likely that the statement derives from him; cf. A. Angrick, P. Klein, *The "Final Solution" in Riga*, op.cit., p. 484.
- [38] A. Angrick, P. Klein, *The "Final Solution" in Riga*, op.cit., p.103.
- [39] Ibid., pp. 112–113.
- [40] Ibid., p. 219.
- [41] Ibid., p. 216, cf. also Avraham Tory, *Surviving the Holocaust. The Kovno Ghetto Diary*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA)/London 1990, p. 69, 275–278.
- [42] A. Angrick, P. Klein, *The "Final Solution" in Riga*, op.cit., p. 153.
- [43] Ibid., p. 144.
- [44] Ibid., p. 155.
- [45] A. Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941–1944*, op.cit., p. 258.

- [46] Cf. Max Michelson, *City of Life, City of Death. Memories of Riga*, University Press of Colorado, Boulder 2001, p. 107.
- [47] Ibid., pp. 111–112.
- [48] Ibid., p. 113.
- [49] Ibid., p. 140.
- [50] G. P. Megargee, M. Dean (eds.), *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos 1933–1945, Vol. III, Part B*, op.cit., p. 1020.
- [51] Max Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland. The Destruction of the Jews of Latvia*, originally self-published in German, Munich 1947, online English edition: (<http://www.jewsoflatvia.com/churbnlettland.pdf>), p. 27.
- [52] A. Angrick, P. Klein, *The “Final Solution” in Riga*, op.cit., pp. 142–143.
- [53] NARA, T-175, Roll 234, p. 772.
- [54] NARA, T-175, Roll 234, p. 878.
- [55] Peter Klein (ed.), *Die Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42. Die Tätigkeits- und Lageberichte des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD*, Edition Hentrich, Berlin 1997, p. 281.
- [56] NARA, T-175, Roll 234, p. 928.
- [57] PS-2273, IMT vol. XXX, pp. 73–74; RGVA, 500-4-92, pp. 57–59.
- [58] Nuremberg document 180-L, IMT vol. XXXVII, pp. 702–703.
- [59] For a map of the borders of these jurisdictions cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reichskommissariat_Ostland
- [60] Ibid., p. 688.
- [61] Ibid., p. 689.
- [62] Carlo Mattogno, Jürgen Graf, *Treblinka. Extermination Camp or Transit Camp?*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2004, pp. 208–209.
- [63] A. Angrick, P. Klein, *The “Final Solution” in Riga*, op.cit., p. 127, n. 81.
- [64] Katrin Reichelt, *Lettland unter deutscher Besatzung 1941–1944. Der lettische Anteil am Holocaust*, Metropol, Berlin 2011, p. 186.
- [65] See Table 4. In *Ereignismeldung* nr 24 from 16 July 1941 it is erroneously claimed that out of the 45,000 inhabitants of Daugavpils, 50% (i.e. 22,500) were Jews. It is hard to

explain how the author of the *Einsatzgruppen* could have made such a grossly exaggerated estimate; NARA, T 175 Roll 233, p. 181.

- [66] K. Reichelt, *Lettland unter deutscher Besatzung 1941–1944*, op.cit., p. 183.
- [67] Cf. Sidney Iwens, *How Dark the Heavens. 1400 Days in the Grip of Nazi Terror*, Shengold, New York 1990, p. 49. Holocaust historians Bernhard Press and Yitzhak Arad give widely divergent estimates for the original number of ghetto inmates – 7,000 and 16,000 respectively – but since the sources to these figures are far from clear the 14,000 figure must be regarded, for the time being, as the more reliable estimate; cf. Yitzhak Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln 2009, p. 148; B. Press, *The Murder of the Jews in Latvia 1941–1945*, op.cit., p. 53.
- [68] Cf. reproduction of page 5 of the report online at: <http://www.holocaust-history.org/works/jaeger-report/gif/img005.gif?size=-1>
- [69] S. Iwens, *How Dark the Heavens*, op.cit., p. 50.
- [70] Ibid., pp. 49–50.
- [71] Ibid., p. 53.
- [72] Ibid., p. 57.
- [73] NARA, T-175, Roll 233, p. 182.
- [74] K. Reichelt, *Lettland unter deutscher Besatzung 1941–1944*, op.cit., p. 185.
- [75] Ibid., p. 184.
- [76] According to exterminationist historiography the massacre took place on 7–9 November 1941; cf. ibid, pp. 185–186.
- [77] Y. Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, op.cit., p. 149.
- [78] A. Angrick, P. Klein, *The “Final Solution” in Riga*, op.cit., p. 268.
- [79] K. Reichelt, *Lettland unter deutscher Besatzung 1941–1944*, op.cit., p. 186. Incredibly enough, Reichelt maintains that this estimate from *October 1941* is contradicted by the documents showing that the ghetto population in *December* that same year amounted to 962. In reality, of course, the October estimate contradicts the claim that 11,034 Daugavpils Jews were murdered in November.
- [80] Ibid., pp. 191–192.

- [81] Edward Anders, Juris Dubrovskis, "Who Died in the Holocaust? Recovering Names from Official Records", *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol. 17, No. 1 (Spring 2003), p. 124.
- [82] K. Reichelt, *Lettland unter deutscher Besatzung 1941–1944*, op.cit., pp. 190–191.
- [83] Cf. <http://wikimapia.org/5591391/lv/Rai%C5%86a-parks>
- [84] *Liepāja*, <http://www.liepajajews.org/LGhetto.pdf>
- [85] K. Reichelt, *Lettland unter deutscher Besatzung 1941–1944*, op.cit., p. 194.
- [86] Y. Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, op.cit., p. 149.
- [87] K. Reichelt, *Lettland unter deutscher Besatzung 1941–1944*, op.cit., p. 191: "In der Zeit vom 14. Bis 17.12.41 wurden 2749 Juden evakuiert". Reichelt states as her source "LVVA Riga, P-83, 1, 25, S. 50 (Tätigkeitsbericht des SS- und Polizeistandortsführers Libau vom 29. Dezember 1941)."
- [88] Edward Anders, Juris Dubrovskis, "Who Died in the Holocaust? Recovering Names from Official Records", *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol. 17, No. 1 (Spring 2003) pp. 124–125.
- [89] *Ibid.*, p. 125, 130.
- [90] *Ibid.*, p. 117.
- [91] RGVA, 500-4-92, p. 184.
- [92] Cf. also IMT vol. XXXVII, p. 688: 4,500 had reportedly been killed during pogroms in Kaunas (Kauen), whereas another 500 had been killed in nearby towns.
- [93] While as stated above the Liepāja massacre in December 1941 is mentioned in an activity report of the SS and Police, the consensus among Holocaust historians appears to be that the mass shooting was carried out as part of the activity of *Einsatzkommando 2*, cf. the Ezergailis quote on the "Stahlecker method" in the first section of this article.
- [94] NARA, T 175 Roll 233, p. 92.
- [95] *Ibid.*, p. 93.
- [96] NARA, T 175 Roll 233, p. 180.
- [97] *Ibid.*, p. 182.
- [98] *Ibid.*, p. 184.

- [99] NARA, T 175 Roll 233, p. 180.
- [100] Ibid.
- [101] NARA T 175 Roll 233, p. 403.
- [102] NARA T 175 Roll 233, p. 519.
- [103] NARA, T 175 Roll 233, p. 1077.
- [104] NARA, T 175 Roll 233, p. 1325.
- [105] Ibid.
- [106] Ibid., p. 1327.
- [107] NARA; T 175 Roll 234, p. 408.
- [108] Facsimile available online at: <http://www.holocaust-history.org/works/jaeger-report/htm/intro000.htm>
- [109] All census figures taken from *Strukturbereich über das Ostland. Teil I: Ostland in Zahlen*, Riga 1942, p. 14. Available online at the website <http://libx.bsu.edu> On the German exonyms for the Latvian locations cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_German_exonyms_for_places_in_Latvia
- [110] *Ostland in Zahlen* gives the German name as “Salis” but this is likely an error for Salisburg, as Salis is the German name of a river (Salaca in Latvian), not a locality.
- [111] *Holokausta izpēte Latvijā. Starptautisko konferenču materiāli, 2003. gada 12.–13. jūnijs, 24. oktobris, Rīga, un 2002.–2003. gada pētījumi par holokaustu Latvijā/The Holocaust research in Latvia. Materials of an International Conference 12–13 June 2003, Riga and 24 October 2003, Rīga and the Holocaust Studies in Latvia in 2002–2003* (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti 12. sējums/Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, Volume 12), Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, Riga 2004.
- [112] *Holokausts Latvijā. Starptautiskās konferences materiāli, 2004. gada 3.–4. jūnijs, Rīga, un 2004.–2005. gada pētījumi par holokaustu Latvijā/Holocaust in Latvia. Materials of an International Conference 3–4 June 2004, Riga and the Holocaust Studies in Latvia in 2004–2005* (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti 18. sējums/Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, Volume 18), Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, Riga 2006.
- [113] *Holokausta pētniecības problēmas Latvijā. 2006.–2007. gada pētījumi par holokaustu Latvijā un starptautiskās konferences materiāli, 2007. gada 6-7. novembris, Rīga/Problems of the Holocaust research in Latvia. The Holocaust Studies in Latvia in 2006–2007 and Proceedings of an International Conference 6–7 November 2007,*

Riga (Latvijas Vēsturnieku komisijas raksti 23. sējums/Symposium of the Commission of the Historians of Latvia, Volume 23), Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, Riga 2008.

- [114] 29,602 Jews registered in the ghetto in October 1941 (see above) + some 5,000 Riga Jews killed in pogroms or shot by EK2 in July–September 1941 according to the *Ereignismeldungen*.
- [115] Mordechai Altshuler, *Soviet Jewry on the Eve of the Holocaust*, Centre for Research of East European Jewry/Ahva Press, Jerusalem 1998, p. 327.
- [116] Edward Anders, Juris Dubrovskis, “Fate of Latvian Jews 1941–1945: Recovering Names from Official Records”, in: *Holokausta Izpētes Problemas Latvijā/The Issues of the Holocaust Research in Latvia*, Reports of an International Conference in Riga 16-17 October 2000, Latvijas vēstures institūta apgāds, Riga 2001, p. 50.
- [117] Ibid., p. 56.
- [118] Ibid., p. 50.
- [119] Y. Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, op.cit., p. 525.
- [120] Eugene M. Kulischer, *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, International Labour Office, Montreal 1943, p. 64.
- [121] *Judisk Krönika*, Vol. 11 Nr 1 (January-February 1942), p. 12. The number of evacuees from Estonia is an underestimate; in reality some 3–4,000 Jews were evacuated from that country.
- [122] M. Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland*, op.cit., p. 9.
- [123] Dov Levin, *Baltic Jews under the Soviets 1940-1946*, Centre for Research and Documentation of Eastern European Jewry, Jerusalem 1994, p. 100.
- [124] Ibid., p. 113, n. 15.
- [125] Andrew Ezergailis, Harold Otto, Guido Augusts, *Nazi/Soviet Disinformation about the Holocaust in Nazi-Occupied Latvia*, Latvijas 50 Gadu Okupācijas Muzeja Fonds, Riga 2005, p. 113.
- [126] *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 42 (1940-1941), p. 598.
- [127] Y. Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, op.cit., pp. 46-47.
- [128] E.M. Kulischer, *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, op.cit., p. 50.
- [129] Cf. Y. Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, op.cit., p. 47; Dov Levin, *The Lesser of Two Evils: Eastern European Jewry under Soviet rule, 1939-1941*, The Jewish

Publication Society, Philadelphia/Jerusalem 1995, p. 200, 208; D. Levin, *Baltic Jews under the Soviets 1940–1946*, op.cit., comment to table on p. 129.

- [130] Cf. Geoffrey P. Megargee (ed.), *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933–1945: Ghettos in German-Occupied Eastern Europe*, vol. II, part B, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2012, p. 1018.
- [131] http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0013_0_12842.html
- [132] Reproduced in negative in Nuremberg document 2273-PS, IMT vol. XXX, p. 77.
- [133] Christoph Dieckmann, *Deutsche Besatzungspolitik in Litauen 1941–1944*, Wallstein, Göttingen 2011, p. 1192.
- [134] 2273-PS, IMT vol. XXX, p. 78.
- [135] Y. Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, op.cit., p. 154.
- [136] Ibid., p. 251.
- [137] LVVA (Latvian State Historical Archives), P-1026-1-3, Bl. 351; reproduced in Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung (ed.), *Verbrechen der Wehrmacht. Dimensionen des Vernichtungskrieges 1941–1944*, 2nd ed., Hamburger Edition, Hamburg 2002, p. 87.
- [138] RGVA 500-1-25/1, p. 170.
- [139] The Jäger Report lists the execution of a total of 2,028 non-Jews, mainly Lithuanian and Russian Communists.

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